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SERMONS THAT HAVE HELPED

BY

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“It is not, I believe, through any physical aspect of things, if that were all, but through the human experiences of the conscience and affections, that the living God comes to apprehension and communion with us.”—MARTINEAU.

“Veritas non eget fulcris falsis, sed se sola multo melius nititur.”—BENDEL’S GNOMON.

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JAMES HEARTT VAN BUREN

Dedicated
TO
TRINITY CHURCH
WATERTOWN, N. Y.,
THE
PARISH OF MY BIRTH AND BAPTISM

INTRODUCTION

If I have ever spoken a word that had help in it for souls in trouble; for human beings in difficulty, doubt, perplexity or danger; for men and women who were honestly looking for the light; I have spoken it in my sermons.

I have been told that they have helped; and for that reason I am publishing some of them, hoping that their helpfulness may be thereby extended.

They may not be classed among the sermons that have greatly enriched the world's storehouse of learning or of eloquence; they contain nothing particularly new. They are not especially controversial, nor argumentative; but they do aim to tell the truth in the hearing of men's consciences and affections; for it is my deep conviction not only that the truth shall make us free, but that men are asking to-day, with a better motive than Pilate's, "What is truth?" I have sought to show that the true answer is in Him who claims the allegiance of every human heart, and I rest His claim upon His own convincing power who declares, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life;" and promises: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

J. H. V. B.

'August, 1908.

ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT;

A WHITSUN-DAY SERMON

“And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.”—Acts, xix: 2.

Imagine St. Paul's astonishment at these words! He had gone to the city of Ephesus for the purpose of holding a confirmation service. “Have you been confirmed?” he said, in effect. “Have you received the gift of the Holy Ghost since you became believers?” Imagine his astonishment when they made the reply we have taken for our text!

And yet these people were neither ignorant nor indifferent. They were disciples of John the Baptist, in a city where it meant no little sacrifice to break away from old traditions. They had been converted and baptized with the baptism of John the Baptist. They were doing their duty, according to all appearance, as far as they knew their duty. Possibly no one had ever told them that they ought to be confirmed

and be faithful communicants in the Christian Church. All except the rudiments of the Christian religion was a sealed book to them. Its full, liberating contents had never been opened. They presented to the astonished eyes of St. Paul a case of arrested development.

There had happened in the city of Jerusalem one morning, not long before, a wonderful thing. The story of it is in our thoughts and has been told in our services to-day. There had been a loud sound as of a tornado. The people hearing it, had come together by the thousand, for the city was full of strangers who had come to keep holiday, when holiday meant holy-day. Flames, like cloven tongues, had been seen flickering and resting above the heads of the disciples. Strangers from all parts of the known world had heard them speak in their own languages "the wonderful works of God." The Christian Church had been inaugurated that very day, and three thousand people had been admitted into its membership.

The promise of the Comforter whom Christ was to send from the Father, who was to guide the disciples into all truth, that they might teach other people, enlighten the ignorant, inspire the dull-hearted and comfort the mourners—this great promise had been fulfilled, and here were these disciples, living in the great city of Ephesus, who had never heard of it! Nay,

not only so, they had not even "so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost."

Every art and science, every study and every attainment known to the mind of man, is written in ascending scales. There is always some higher plane above and beyond the level that has been reached. The child, just emerging from the grammar school, sees it in the high school. The high school graduate sees the still higher education before him in the university. The college graduate finds the technical or professional school awaiting him. The profession itself lies out beyond the training or professional school, and in his profession the man who seeks room for the full development of his powers must seek it in the higher ranks, where alone there is room.

It is so in the commercial life. There men stand in the line of promotion, and business life becomes like a university, educational in its requirements. The same is true in the ideal of civil service, where advancement is to be gained, not as the price of political service but as the reward of efficient work.

And if this be true everywhere else, why should it be thought strange that it is so in religion? Yet it is doubtless the fact that many people to-day who certainly cannot be considered ignorant of the Christian religion, have not so much as thought of this. "Why is it,"

they ask, "that we cannot solve this or that problem? Why does mystery everywhere baffle our understanding? Why cannot we reach yonder attainment?" The reply is along the self-same line which St. Paul pursued when he addressed the confirmation class in Ephesus: "Have you received the Holy Ghost since you became disciples? Have you been going on from higher to higher? Have you been seeking for promotion in your spiritual life?" And the unspoken reply is just the same, "Why these are questions no one ever asked us before. We have not so much as heard whether any advance is required. We have understood that we must be on the right side, and that that would be enough. We have done about as well as we knew how. What more can be expected? If a man lives up to the light that has come to him and does his duty as he sees it, what more can you expect?"

Cheap and specious reasoning, every bit of it, common though it be! No man lives up to the light he has, who does not find the light growing brighter day by day. No man does his duty as he sees it, who stops anywhere short of perfection. No man does as well as he knows how, who is not "growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ"; developing, upbuilding, educating, struggling for self-mastery just as long as he has breath. There

is no such thing as standing still in the Christian life, nor in any life. Develop or degenerate is the only alternative. Forward it must be or backward it will be. Upward we tend or downward we drift as long as we live. Arrested development spells death or decay. We are not to-day where we were yesterday, nor can we be, any more than the sun's shadow falls on the same spot at this hour where it fell at the same hour yesterday.

Let us make this clearer. Take an aggravated case. Take the man who complains that he has tried religion and been disappointed, and that he has concluded there are not many true Christians in the world. He says, "I understood that I was going to find peace and comfort in believing, and that I should see myself surrounded with high characters and refined natures. I have not found it so. I was told about duty, duty, duty, until I was sick of the sound of it, and I do not see that churchgoing people get more out of their life than I do out of mine. I went to church thinking I should enjoy the restfulness or the inspiration of its worship; and the minister made me weary with an appeal for missions. What on earth do I care about missions? I thought I was going to overcome my besetting sins, and conquer my temptations, and be a better man and have a cleaner conscience. I do not see that I am any

improvement on myself. There must be something wrong. What is it, and whose fault is it?"

Beloved, what ought to be said to such a man as that? What would you say to him if you were a minister? It seems to me that the Master would tell him, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of heaven; not far but just far enough to miss it." Why did the minister's appeal for missions tire you? Because you did not understand the subject. Why do you care nothing about missions? Because you are not a stockholder in the enterprise. Why is the sound of duty so disagreeable to you? Why are you not conquering your temptations? Just because you have stopped, it may be, at the threshold of the kingdom, and not even lifted your hand to knock at the door. The Spirit of God has been speaking to you, bidding you, Go forward; and you have kept your heart closed to His entreaty. You "have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." By your own confession, you have been "quenching the Spirit." Your spiritual development, in other words, has been arrested; and this thing can happen both before and after confirmation.

One reason, and a very significant and important one it is, why men are not better and happier than they are, as a rule, is that when one asks them, "Are you a communicant in the

Church? Are you a regular attendant upon its worship? Are you interested in its welfare, and its work?" The answer so frequently is, "No, I am not myself, but my wife is." Did you ever know a man who was unselfishly, heart and soul, interested in spreading "the kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost," which is the true meaning of all the missionary work in the world, who did not find his religion a deep and abiding joy? Did you ever know a man who neglected his duty and hated the sound of it who enjoyed himself? Pleasure needs honest toil, as food needs hunger, to make it relish.

Did you ever know what it meant to "go your way into God's courts with thanksgiving"; to come here with a heart running over with gratefulness to God for having permitted you to do some generous deed, for having put it into your heart to speak a kind word of encouragement to some poor soul who was suffering for the need of just that word? Do you know what it means, I say, to come into God's holy habitation, your heavenly Father's house, with such a celestial remembrance and in such a frame of mind as that? Why, at such times it seems as though the air itself were full of angels, and the very stones in the temple walls cry out in song; and there is peace and restfulness, comfort, yes, and joy, such as this world

can neither give nor take away. If you do not believe it, it is open to you to make the experiment.

And if you have missed these experiences, if hosannas have languished on your tongue, and your devotion has died, the place to look for the reason is in yourself. You are "out of step." And you may be perfectly sure the question in some form or other is a real one for you, "Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed?" Why should it occasion surprise that one does not appreciate the joy of the higher Christian education, the unfolding of the sublimer Christian truths, when it may be that he has not yet graduated from the grammar school of faith? People who are fond of the higher mathematics assure us there is pleasure to be derived from the solution of problems which seem to some of us very abstruse, dull and uninspiring, simply because we have not yet left behind us the elements of arithmetic. The child who is plodding over the multiplication table cannot see much joy to be found in solving the problems of integral calculus.

The parallel holds in religion. Open your hearts, that the Spirit of God may come in; then, with His help, climb the heights to which He points the way. Keep Whitsun-Day with a new purpose, let it be truly the birthday of the Church of the Living God in your own heart

and apprehension, but remember that the Church itself is a treasure in human possession, often manifesting human imperfections. Do not be so ready to call church people hypocrites, but be a little more ready to ask how much of the Church's failure to realize its own best aims and purposes is due to the fact that your place in church is vacant. The question for us after all is not whether other people are better than we are but whether we are the people we would be if we did not stop and loiter on the way which leads to eternal life. Do not wonder that the Church seems at times to fight a losing battle; but be more ready to consider how much of her ineffectiveness is due to the fact that so many of the baptized and often-times the confirmed men of the Church are acting the part of deserters in the hour of the Church's need. Inform yourself and you will take more interest in the Church's concerns, its needs, its struggles and its victories. Really, gentlemen, you will find it is worth while to read up "the bulletins from the front," for the joy it will bring you; to say nothing of the service you can render to the cause for which the Church stands in this world. When a man tells me he cares nothing for missions, I always know it is because he knows nothing about them. To know is to care.

Realize that the Church of God is a mani-

festation of the kingdom of God, and while you put your heart and hand into its cause, which is the cause of Christ against everything that is evil, and for everything that is good and true and worth while, you shall come to realize that the words of the Apostle were wisely spoken when he said, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

We Christians need to "stir up the gift" of God's Holy Spirit "which is in us." We need more and more to cherish the spiritual life and cultivate it. We have our troubles, our burdens and our faults. We do not claim to be perfect; Christ is the only example for men to follow. Our hope and prayer is that we all may find ourselves growing daily stronger, more resolute, more Christlike, and, as the beautiful prayer in the Confirmation Office phrases it, "Daily increasing" in the Holy Spirit of God "more and more," as we add, day after day, and year after year, new pages and chapters to the increasingly beautiful story of our lives, "until we come to that everlasting kingdom," before whose throne the Holy Spirit even now "maketh intercession for us," even as He pleads with us, blending His voice with the voice of the Church, so that we hear "The Spirit and the bride say, Come, And he that heareth shall say, Come.—" And that is what

it means, to be "interested in missions"; to be saying by word or act "Let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." Has it not a claim on you? It is the most important thing in the world!

"Spirit of purity and grace
Our weakness pitying see;
Oh, make our hearts thy dwelling-place,
And worthier Thee."

THE INDICTMENT OF THE WORLD;

OR THE WITNESS-BEARING SPIRIT

“And when he is come he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment;

Of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.”—St. John, xvi: 8, 9.

We have come upon deep things in the mystery of these words. I presume there is no one of us who, having encountered them in his reading of the New Testament, has not said to himself, “I wonder what that means.” It is far easier to feel their depth than to fathom their meaning. Explanations abound in the commentaries, but the explanations not only do not explain, they do not even agree; and we are thrown back upon the words themselves, to try and find out what it was that the Master meant by them.

He was speaking of the coming of the Holy Spirit. After His own departure, the Com-

forter, He said, was to come, and when He came, He was to bring an indictment against the world on three counts; to reprove, or, as the Revised Version has it, more accurately, to convict, the world in respect of these three things;—sin, righteousness and judgment. Of sin, because of unbelief; of righteousness, because of Christ's disappearance from the sight of men; and of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. The mystery grows deeper the longer we dwell upon it, and it is only as we look at the facts which are the accomplishment of the prophecy that we can hope to understand. Prophecy must always be interpreted by the event. Let us then look at the facts.

Does this world need the mission of the Divine Spirit that it may be convicted in respect of right and wrong? Does not nature itself tell a man when he has done the one and departed from the other? What need is there for any supernatural power to point out that cruelty and oppression, robbery, violence, murder, lust, drunkenness, gambling and selfishness are wrong; that they are in the world; that they make a vast amount of trouble; that they forever encroach upon the right and devour it, as the waves of the sea, beating upon the unprotected shore, waste away the land?

Very true, and there would have been no

need of the mission of the Holy Spirit of God had this been all He had to teach on this subject. Conviction is furnished by nature, and the same is true of the things that are righteous. We know very well, without any one telling us, when the right is done. We can understand and appreciate the beauty and attractiveness of virtue and goodness and truth. We know righteous acts and the righteous man without the aid of supernatural discernment.

What need then is there for the convicting power of the Holy Spirit? You will observe that the Saviour predicts the conviction of the world on the charge of sin, because of a peculiar reason; and of righteousness, because of a still more peculiar reason. Of sin, because Christ is not believed on. Of righteousness, because He goes to the Father. Christ's relation to the world is like baptism, "death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness." The mystery begins to grow a little clearer when we remember that. It is that man may have release from the guilt and power of sin; that he may grow in righteousness; that the horrid host of sins whose presence we deplore, may be driven out of the world by the victorious Christ and that the peaceable fruits of righteousness may be made to flourish on the world's great battle-fields; therefore the Holy Spirit of God comes into this world and finds a home "in

these dull hearts of ours." It is to establish a throne in every heart, whereon Christ shall be enthroned as the glorious King, with "a kingdom still increasing, a kingdom without end." It is for this, that the Spirit of God comes, proclaiming the certain issue of the world's conflict, the absolute certainty of Christ's triumph, however men may doubt it; arming the children of God with weapons of a spiritual warfare, mightier than the carnal weapons of this world; giving them the strength that is able to do all things, the courage that nothing can daunt, the patience which nothing can weary, the heroism that knows no fear; and assuring them that they who fight for "the Lord, our Righteousness," against sin, Satan and death, are fighting on the winning side.

The Holy Spirit provides the standard by which to test and try the issue between sin and righteousness. Unbelief, our Saviour says, is the measure of one; His own absence is the test of the other. Sin is the result of unbelief. Righteousness, the result of the departure of Christ. Then that must be why it is "expedient" that He "should go away," as He said.

Now, let us go a little deeper into the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. Why is it that sin is the indictment, "because of unbelief?" Our answer is in another place, "He that believeth

not, is condemned already," and "this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness."

Right here, it seems to me, the Holy Spirit is doing His gracious work, in reminding us what foolishness it is to say that belief is a matter of comparatively small importance, and that conduct is the principal thing. What an absurdity it is, to say, it matters not what we believe, if only we live as we ought. God's Holy Spirit tells us there can be no such thing as righteousness which does not proceed from a living faith. "Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin." But we are talking now of heart-faith, not mere lip-service, not the mere recital of the Creed. We are talking of that sort of grasp upon Christ which resembles the grasp of the drowning sailor on the spar that will save his life. Men may say a great deal with their tongues; they may profess a great deal in outward appearance; but when a gulf yawns between creed and conduct so great that no bridge can span it, it is idle to say that the thing which pretends to be faith is anything but a sham and a fraud. The Holy Spirit shall convict the world in respect of sin, says Christ, "because they believe not on me," and we Christians are quite ready to applaud the saying, and tell the unbeliever what a fool he is for priding himself, as he so frequently does, on his unbelief, as if it were a

virtue. It is worth our careful remembrance that the man is entirely right if he retorts upon us and says, "You are no better than I am if you stand up in Church on Sunday and say, 'I believe in God the Father Almighty,' and then go out on Monday to cheat and defraud and oppress the brother, who is made in the image of God."

And yet, all the same, and admitting the worst that can be said against the hypocrites, it still remains true that wilful unbelief is sin, according to the witness of the Holy Spirit; because it is the shutting of the eyes when the light has come, and letting the soul go on in darkness when it needs only to look and see that the night has gone. Not to believe in Christ is then to sin against one's self. It is to sin against the world that needs the Christ, for no one will advocate the cause of Him in whom he does not believe; and it is to sin against God, because it makes Him a liar.

He shall convict the world in respect of righteousness, for a still more peculiar reason, "because I go to my Father and ye see me no more." In the thought of our Saviour, it is not righteousness that is righteous only when it is conscious of the presence of Christ. It is not righteousness in the eyes of good citizens that a man refrain from burglary only when the police are around; that a child behave himself in

school only when conscious of the teacher's eye.

Righteousness is righteousness only when it can be trusted. He, the Spirit of God, shall convict the world of righteousness, "because I go to my Father and ye see me no more, but because ye do in my absence just as ye would if ye saw me." Oh, my friends, what a test that is! Who can endure it? Which one of us, away down in the depths of his own heart can say or believe that he always does as he always would if he remembered that Christ is standing at his side? Who has not screened himself behind the flimsy pretense of the pagan of early days, "Tush! the Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it"? Who has not let sin be born, grow and come to maturity, just because he dared to think that God would not be mindful, and that the face of the pure and perfect Christ was turned another way? The Holy Spirit of God reminds us that true righteousness does not stop to ask who is looking, does not require to be watched, but so magnifies in the human soul the love of righteousness that there is neither fear of detection, for "perfect love casteth out fear," nor the inclination to evil, for every evil deed is but another nail in the hands of Him we love, another thorn in the plaited crown of Him "who died to take away transgressions," and who is gone to the right hand of God, trusting us, *trusting us!* to

build up the kingdom of righteousness by the contribution of every life that accepts Him for its King!

There is another count in the indictment of the world. We are told that the Holy Spirit shall convict the world of "judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." Judgment, I take it, means here, the distinguishing between sin and righteousness. The work of the Holy Spirit is that He is to convict the world in respect to the distinction it makes, or fails to make, between right and wrong; and the peculiar reason is that strange saying, "Because the prince of this world is judged." Whatever the Master may have meant by that expression, it is clear that there are two standards of judgment, and one of those standards has been judged and condemned already. The standard of the prince of this world may phrase itself in a variety of ways. It may tell of the customs of polite society. It may hold up the average of human conduct. It may excuse the white lie and appear dreadfully shocked at the black one. It may set the bounds of human perfection on a level with that of the man whose whole conception of virtue is satisfied with having a long string of negatives to offer as its honor roll; such as, "I never cheated anybody in my life. I never told a lie. I never took a mean advantage, nor ever was short in my accounts. I

never embezzled any one's money, nor ever did a dishonest piece of work." I suppose there are people in this world, and there may be some of them here to-day, who expect to be admitted to heaven, on some such credentials as these. Contrast with such a negative standard the one which a St. Paul raises, and you will perceive the difference, Oh, how gloriously his standard rises above all such negations! "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Surely, dear friends, it is better to fight under that standard than the other, which the Holy Spirit of God has condemned; but it is clear that the world is open to the indictment for its misjudgment because it has so often taken, and does still so often take, the standard of the prince of this world instead of the standard of Christ, and "because the prince of this world has been judged," standard and all, by Him whom we call "the Lord, our righteousness."

Beloved, as we stand to-day, trying to measure something of the deep things which God's Holy Spirit is doing in this world, this world which Jesus has redeemed and which is to become His own kingdom, there comes to my

mind the story of a dream which, for a closing thought, will give us the landing place where we may rest, and from which we may, if we will, make some new beginnings with the help of that same Holy Spirit who is also called the Comforter.

It is related of two brothers that one was selfish and satisfied with pleasures and the standards of this world, while the other was alert, generous and seeking always to live the life that should be a power for good in the world. The story continues:

“In the course of time, he who had been so benevolent and responsive to the calls of duty was suddenly called from the scenes of his earthly labors to his eternal reward.

“The surviving brother felt keenly the loss he had sustained; he grieved deeply, and refused to be comforted. One evening as he reclined in his easy chair, sad and broken in spirit, he fell asleep and dreamed.

“Before him he saw the heavens open, and the City of God in all its glory revealed. In the foreground of the vision, however, there stood forth a temple of peculiar magnificence; every line and angle and feature of it presented a picture of exquisite grace and beauty. As he lingered, feasting his eyes upon the grandeur of the scene, an angel appeared, and addressing him, said:

“ ‘You are admiring this palace; come with me, and I will show you within.’ As the angel opened the door the man entered. The sight that met his vision was beyond all expression. He stood transfixed with wonder and delight, and when he recovered sufficiently to speak he said to the angel: ‘Whose is this mansion, so beautiful, so grand?’

“The angel answering, said: ‘It belongs to thy brother, built by him during his lifetime upon earth by his deeds of benevolence, charity, and love. In laying up treasures here he has this temple, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.’

“Then sorrowfully turning to the man, the angel said: ‘Oh, poor soul, thou hast misused thy sacred trust. In this place of many mansions there is not one for thee; thou hast not yet laid the first stone.’ With this announcement the angel disappeared, the heavenly vision melted away, and the dreamer awoke with the words ringing in his ears: ‘Not one stone laid.’ ”

It is a simple story, but it touches the depths of life and destiny. May God’s Holy Spirit help us all to remember its lesson as we shall be glad to have remembered it when our eyes shall come to “behold the King in his beauty, in the land that is very far off.”

THE OPEN DOOR OF HEAVEN;

A TRINITY-SUNDAY SERMON

“After this I looked, and behold a door was opened in Heaven.”—Rev., iv: 1

To-day we stand upon the high tableland of the Christian faith. From point to point we have ascended, through that first half of the Christian Year wherein are passed in review before our eyes the successive events in the life of our Blessed Lord. From Advent until Trinity Sunday we are taught to think of Christ. From Trinity Sunday to Advent we are thinking of the Christian. I do not like that distinction which classes the first half as doctrinal, and the second half as practical; for doctrinal and practical must both be one; but to-day we stand between the two halves of the Christian Year, upon the height which we have gained, with eyes uplifted to the open door of Heaven, and with ear attentive to the sounds which proceed therefrom.

Trinity Sunday is not a time for us to tell what we think about God. It is a time to listen to what God has told us about Himself.

And what He has told has been spoken in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ who manifests, who reveals and who is, "very God, of very God." That He has testified of the Father no one will question; that He has borne witness to the Holy Spirit no one doubts; and of these two Persons He has spoken in terms that leave no room for question as to their Nature. The only question we need to ask in order to satisfy ourselves, if we need satisfying, that His revelation is true, is the question He himself proposed, "What think ye of Christ?" If He be true, His message and revelation are true, and all that we can know of the nature of God, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is that revelation which Christ has made and which He Himself is.

I ask you to consider with me to-day the witness He bore of Himself concerning one single point, His resurrection from the dead, for we were singing a little while ago of Him who said, "I am the door," that "when He had overcome the sharpness of death, He opened the kingdom of Heaven to all believers." He claims to have overcome the sharpness of death. What can we say for His claim? Upon our answer we may rest all our thoughts for Trinity Sunday.

In regard to the resurrection and the proof of it, so that we may make it an article of faith

and mention it twice in our Creed, saying, "The third day He rose again from the dead," and "I believe in the resurrection of the body," we shall consider first, not the teachings of Holy Scripture, but a different line of thought entirely. It may be that I ought to take the sacred record first, but I am not going to do it. I am going to place first the universal longing for immortality. I suppose there is nothing in all the world, or out of it, that we want so much as life immortal, and this universal longing, "this pleasing hope," which all mankind does entertain and cherish beyond all other desires, constitutes my first reason for thinking the desire was meant to be granted.

Mind, I do not say that this universal desire proves the answer to it true, I only say it creates a strong presumption in its favor; for when I find in the human being a capacity for appreciating the harmonies of Mozart and Mendelssohn and along with that power to appreciate, I find that an instrument has been given whereby the power may be exerted, it seems clear that music and the soul were made for one another; that is the way in which my reason works, and I think it is logical. When I discover in a human being the capacity for rejoicing in color, form and visible loveliness, and another instrument provided whereby that capacity may be satisfied, it appears evident

again, that outward and visible beauty and the soul of man were made for one another, and again I think I am logical. Observing then, the use for which the ear and the eye were intended, I think I can appreciate the argument of the Psalmist when he exclaims, "He that made the eye, shall he not see?" or "He that made the ear, shall he not hear?" and it seems to me perfectly reasonable if I go a little farther and say, "He that planted in the human soul this tenacious and universal longing for immortality, so deeply imbedded in that soul that it cannot by any possibility be cast out, shall He not himself be supposed to have provided the answer to that desire?" In other words, "Immortality fits the soul as seeing fits the eye, or as hearing fits the ear." Furthermore, while men may cheat and delude and deceive themselves, the truth remains that nothing but immortal life ever does or ever will satisfy the soul of man.

"But do we really long so for immortality? Have you not overstated it?" I think some one may ask; and I answer: Think of the father whose little child has unclasped its clinging arms from around his neck, and whose tiny form has been hidden from his eyes, save as sometimes in his dreams it comes back to him in the beauty it wore in days he cannot recall without a tear. What words can measure the longing of that father's heart, the desire too

deep for words, that this little chapter which has been closed is but the beginning of a glorious history, the history of a human life which was not born to die? Think of the brother whose brother has fallen by his side; think of husband and wife, torn apart by the ruthless hand of death; think of the child who has learned wisdom at his father's lips, and love for God and man beside his mother's knee; ask these whether of all the things they desire there is anything to compare, in the intensity of its yearning, with the desire for life immortal, under some condition and in some state that will know no separation, but where sacred companionships like these shall be renewed, nevermore to be broken.

No, I do not think we have overstated this desire, nor do I think it is possible that it should be overstated. Think of the lives that have no chance in this world. Of all the desires that are known to man this is the strongest; the desire for opportunity and an equal chance. And Jesus, we are told, claimed the power to satisfy it. There have been other leaders and teachers of men, but no one save Himself ever claimed to have "brought life and immortality to light." It is worth while to consider what reason we have for thinking His claim was true.

Thus far, we have looked at the universality of man's desire, not as a proof but as a pre-

sumption that the resurrection is a fact. And so next we turn to the record.

I am not going to recite it all. It is well known to you, but I am going to call your attention to the remarkable circumstance that it claims to have been the record of eye-witnesses, and that it is a story so remarkable as to render the man who considers it an invention the most illogical of human beings for doubting its truth; and furthermore, it is a record which bears all the tests we can subject a record to, even to such contradiction in detail as no inventor or forger would have dared to let go uncorrected, but just such as four independent witnesses would be sure to have left in their records, if what they tell was true.

Let four men from this congregation go down the street and return and tell us what they saw. I venture to say there would be more discrepancies and contradictions in their report than can be found in the story of the different witnesses who have reported to us the resurrection.

I take next the character of Christ. There is an old saying which expresses clearly the dilemma in which one finds himself who ventures to say that Christ was a good man, but that He was less than divine. There are a great many people who are ready to say with all respect and reverence that the character itself is per-

fect, and never betrays a fault, but that He was only a man for all that. The saying to which I refer is, "If Christ is not God, He is not a good man." *Christus, si non Deus, non est bonus.* For He claimed to have risen from the dead. He not only claimed it but He made His unwilling disciples believe it so intensely that they were willing to die for the truth of His claim. They organized the Christian ministry for this special purpose, saying, "Of these which have companied with us, must one be ordained to bear witness of His resurrection."

The theory that He deceived them is not consistent with the verdict of mankind that He was perfectly good. Let those who deny His resurrection remember that they are charging the only perfect character the world has ever seen with being a liar; and let it be remembered furthermore, when men admit that Christ's character was perfect, that it was a character drawn, not by the world's masters in literature and history; that it was not portrayed by a Shakespeare, though it far surpasses all the creations of his inventive genius, but that it was a character depicted by four men of whom it is true to say that they were no more than ordinary men in their literary ability. The theory that this character was a fiction requires more credulity than the truth requires of faith.

There is more, you see, to this proposition

than will endure to be hastily dismissed. The story of the resurrection, and the question, "What think ye of Christ and of His character in its bearing upon that story?" is a question which refuses to stay dismissed. It persistently demands an answer.

The theory that He was self-deceived is not consistent with the fact that there are on record sayings of His which surpass in wisdom, and in their power and hold upon the human affections, all other sayings of which we have any record. His are not the words of a weak-minded man, self-deceived. Even the officers who were sent to arrest Him brought back word, saying, "We could not take him; for never man spake like this man." Such a character is not to be explained on the theory that He was Himself deluded when He claimed that He "had overcome the sharpness of death."

I have led your thoughts along this line, as I intimated at the outset, for the purpose of showing to you some reason for thinking that the revelation or manifestation of God in His triune nature, must itself be true, because Jesus made it. He is Himself the open door of Heaven. In His words, we hear the voice of God. In His human life, we see what the human life would be, if God Himself should live it. In His actions we behold the power of God over the universe; and in His revelation of

God, not only is every deepest desire of our spiritual nature satisfied, so far as it relates to immortal life, but also He has given to the world a conception of God which far out-reaches the human capacity to fully grasp it, much less to have invented it.

He has shown to the child of God that divine Fatherhood which answers to man's childhood, and He has shown that Fatherhood in its infinite compassion, mercy, tenderness and wisdom, insomuch that the child of God may confidently walk hand in hand with the Heavenly Father and be led by the Infinite Wisdom to thoughts that surpass the power of human speech to declare them. In Himself He has revealed the conception of the brotherhood and sonship of humanity, so far surpassing all other conceptions of sonship and brotherhood which have ever been set forth, that we are only now beginning to enter into the fulness of its meaning. Truly, in the revelation of God in Christ Jesus, we may say, without denial of the sonship of mankind, that He is the Only-begotten Son of the Father. And again, God stands revealed to us as the Son, and yet fatherhood and childhood are seen in the revelation, not separate and distinct, but blended in one, according to the wonderful words of Christ Himself, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father, for I and My Father are one."

And now, He had overcome the sharpness of death. He had opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. He had finished the work that was given Him to do; but in order that men should enter the open door of heaven, in order that nothing should prevent them from receiving the gift of life immortal, He told of One who was to come, and be their Guide, leading them into all truth, giving them power to overcome all temptation, and win the victory. And concerning that Holy Spirit whose power is thus infinite over the hearts and lives of men, He can be no less than God, since it is true of Him, as one has written, "I say then walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh, for to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

Looking and listening to-day at the open door of Heaven, we have seen and heard things which pass the power of human speech. Reverently one may wish, as he closes his Trinity Sunday sermon, that for all to whom that sermon has been preached, this prayer may be answered: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be and remain with you evermore. Amen."

THE PATRIARCH'S DISCOVERY;

OR GOD'S UNSUSPECTED PRESENCE

“Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.”—Gen., xxviii: 16.

These were the awakening words of Jacob, after his beautiful dream. The ladder from earth to Heaven, illumined with Heaven's own shining host, and “bright with many an angel,” was still in his thought.

He stood in the land of Haran, far from Canaan, in the land which once had been the home of his grandfather. He had gone thither by the command of his father, seeking for a wife. But he had no high opinion of that ancestral country. It was not the land of promise. Weary and worn he had lain him down to rest, amid the stones, of which he took one for a pillow on which to lay his head, and as he slept, God came to him and showed him the ascending and descending angels, and promised him, in words that must be forever the pilgrim's consolation, “Behold I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest.”

The promise has become a part of our own

religion. We think of no land as so remote that God is not there; we consider no place as so desolate that we can rightly call it a God-forsaken land. It is no surprise to us to find indications of God's presence in the darkest continent; and we are inclined to regard the patriarch as very much prejudiced and perhaps a trifle narrow-minded, not to say bigoted, when we see him waking up in the morning with that exclamation on his lips, which we have taken for our text, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not."

It is as if he had supposed that Canaan was the only religious country in the world, and that he could escape from God's presence by "taking the wings of the morning and remaining" in any remotest part of land or sea.

And yet, on the whole, it is not so strange that Jacob should have entertained such an idea as it is worthy of remark that he changed his opinion; and Jacob's possible narrowness, his restricted ideas of God's presence, are not so very different from some of the ideas we pilgrims of modern times entertain, as perhaps we may be disposed to imagine.

The unsuspected presence of God reveals itself to us with something of a shock, or at least with an element of Jacob's own surprise at times, and we are not so "broad" as we sometimes flatter ourselves that we are. For

instance, we love our Church, we are deeply attached to the ways of worship which have become customary with us. We think our own the best way of developing the Christian character, and from this idea, it is only a short step to that other one, that ours is the only way.

We sing the words in our service, "We are His people and the sheep of His pasture," and we grow to be unmindful of the divine assurance, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold." And some day it happens to us to find ourselves among Christian people whose ways are different from ours, whose mode of worship is strange to us, and when they are discovered to be just as true, just as high-minded, just as devout as we are, it occasions surprise in us. We have known them under so many different names that we have forgotten to call them brethren, and it comes as a real surprise when it suddenly dawns on us that "The Lord is in this place; and we knew it not."

We are not alone in this peculiarity, however, if one may trust the evidence. Christians have so many surnames that the one family name has to a certain extent, unfortunately, passed out of remembrance; just as if a man from Kansas, meeting a man from Vermont, should quite overlook the fact that both are Americans. Or, just as it happened one day, in a certain one of our parishes; where a woman who

had come there for medical treatment was ministered to and visited with all the Christian tenderness of clergy and parishioners, surrounded with all the friendship which ought to appear in such a case, as a matter of course. But one day a visitor met one of the attendants, who evidently did not know as much about us as was to be desired, and who expressed a surprise very like that of Jacob's, to think that such attention should be bestowed by kind-hearted people connected with the Episcopal Church. And her remark was a curious one to us who heard of it: "Why, I did not know Episcopalians was that way." One could not help wondering whether the fault was hers or ours.

At the same time, one must admit that God's presence in the religious life of our fellow-Christians of other names is sometimes a surprise to us, when really it has no right to be surprising at all. The illustration suggests another example, in which the patriarch's surprise is like our own. We are hearing very much nowadays about corruption in municipal government. Doubtless there is occasion for much to be said, and doubtless there is abundant reason for thinking that our American city governments in some important respects stand in need of correction. But, without apologizing for the evils whereof complaint is made, I

cannot help wondering at times whether the complaint is not being overdone.

Wholesale denunciations and indiscriminate criticisms are quite as deplorable as blind and unthinking praise. There is evidence in every city that our municipal governments are not wholly corrupt. And when one has heard very much about the abuses of power and the decay of public virtue, and then turns his attention to the elements of good and wise administration which are easy to find, as well as the devotion and singleness of purpose which, as a rule, characterize the various departments of municipal life, he cannot help exclaiming again, with a deep-drawn sigh of relief, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not."

Widening the vision, one thinks of the Christian nation; and there rise in his thought the rumors of war, conquest and selfishness. But not very long ago there fell upon the listening ear a gentler sound; there came a sighing like the summer wind, that was as holy as a benediction, and the Christian nation stood,—do you not remember it?—as with uncovered head, reverent, sympathetic, tenderly compassionate, watching in the presence-chamber of England's dying Queen Victoria, whom all hearts loved and for whom all eyes were filled with tears. And as the pulse grew feebler and the breath more faintly drawn, there came, as though an

angel had proclaimed the very terms of international peace, and universal sympathy, the sublime truth that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on the face of the whole earth."

It is at such moments as that, when the grief of one people was the sorrow of all mankind; yes, it is at such supreme moments as that, that one hears the turmoil and tumult of strife grow calm, the tempest die away; and the majestic "Peace, be still," becomes a new reminder of the patriarch's words of surprise, "Surely, the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not."

Pursue the thought into the individual experiences of your own daily life. Some of your days stand out among the others, as bright particular points where God's life was manifestly near to yours. And then there are other days in every one's remembrance when it has seemed as though they were far from Canaan, alone and forsaken in Haran's stony waste. The stones on which you rested your weary head made a hard pillow when the sun went down; but who has not learned that it needed the night to bring out the stars? Who has not found adversity the testing of friendship? Who has not had some vision of a ladder from earth to Heaven, with Heaven's glory shining down upon its golden steps and "the angels of God ascending and descending" there?

We must not forget the presence of God in the ordinary days, even when their events seem as commonplace as the stones of Haran's wilderness. We must not forget the presence of God in the hours we spend at the everyday duty; for when we come to look back upon such days and such duties as make up the measure of by far the largest part of every life we can surely see the tokens of a Presence there that was blessing us when we were faithful, reproving us when we grew negligent, cheering us when we were downcast, and giving us visions whenever we turned our thoughts upward; until it becomes true of our dullest days and beautifully true of our saddest hours, that "The Lord was in this place; though we knew it not."

And yet for all this, there are times and places which are marked by special manifestation of the holy presence of God. Sunday we rightly call the Lord's Day; not because the other days are not His, but because He would have us realize that His presence fills all time and all eternity, and because we always realize a truth better by having some special time to think of it. At nine o'clock in the morning, the child is studying Geography, and at eleven Arithmetic, not because Geography is not true at eleven o'clock, nor because Arithmetic is not important at nine; but because there must be

some special time to learn the things which are true all the time.

The building set apart for God's worship rings with the words, "The Lord is in His Holy Temple," not because He is not in the street, and in our home, and everywhere else; not because we can localize and confine Him within our walls, but as it were, by an object lesson, teaching us, His children, that His presence makes all places holy, and that no place can be holy without Him. People used to be troubled by that expression in connection with the Holy Communion, "The Real Presence." But they found their trouble disappearing when it occurred to them that the Holy Communion was where He would be sure to be present, really and truly, whether His sacramental presence could be explained or not; and so that expression, "The Real Presence," was seen to be of value and allowed to stand.

The united worship in which "two or three are gathered" in His name, has the promise of Christ's presence. "There am I," He says, "in the midst." Not because He cannot be found in the individual prayer, nor because He does not walk with us in our business, in our homes, or wherever we may be; but because He has ways of special manifestation of the special nearness of the Divine presence, whereby He seeks to teach us that He will be with us "in all

places wheresoever we go," and because there are sure to be times and places in which we shall especially want to feel the assurance that He never leaves us nor forsakes us.

But perhaps someone may ask me if I am not in danger of undermining men's devotion to the Church by admitting that it is true when they say, "We can find God in our home and in the fields as truly as in the Church." I answer, No, there is no such danger; there never is any danger of undermining the Church by telling the truth. God's presence in the home is a real presence. It seems to me it must make the Church only the dearer when in our homes we have learned the home-idea, and that the Church is in another sense the Father's house, His children's home, blessed with another manifestation of His presence where rich and poor "may meet together," remembering that "He is the Maker of them all."

As you return this day to your homes, dear friends, take with you the conviction of God's presence there, carry that conviction with you into your business and into every occupation, and may His blessings abound upon you and your children in abundant measure for evermore.

THE BELLS OF THE HORSES;

OR ZECHARIAH'S VISION,

“In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD.”
Zech., xiv: 20.

In the vision of Zechariah, many strange elements are mingled; but Zechariah is a most comforting prophet. And through all the confused and bewildering features of his prophecy, there speaks the assurance of a calm, strong and settled belief. Through all the blurred aspect of coming events, he foresees and foretells the ultimate triumph.

It is good to read his terrible chapters for the courage they inspire. It is good to hear his reiterated outbursts of confidence and of hope; for there is always contagion in the exulting tones of a wisely hopeful teacher's voice, and Zechariah is an enthusiastic teacher, sent, as we believe, to teach the children of Zion in all the ages, that Zion is to be victorious, that Jerusalem has not lived in vain.

And what is this particular fragment of his prophecy which we have chosen for our text

this morning? "In that day," the day of triumphant Jerusalem, he says, "There shall be upon the bells of the horses, Holiness unto the Lord." Let us try to understand his meaning.

The high priest, we are told, used to wear a golden crown or plate upon his forehead; and on it was placed this same inscription. The bells on the trappings of the horses were to bear the same words as the crown or plate on the high priest's forehead. We are told also that there were sacred vessels in the temple service, used for sacrifice and for the purposes of the altar; but there were also vessels used for indifferent purposes not connected with the altar service. And he says, "The pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar."

The interpretation is clear. Everything is to have sacredness. The distinction between secular and sacred is to be done away. Now, there are only two ways in which this could occur; either by degrading the sacred or elevating the secular. It is the latter that is to take place. The bells on the horses are to speak the same thing as the crown on the forehead of the priest, the vessels of secular use are to be as sacred as the bowls of the altar.

And why not? Why should it be otherwise? If ever the Sun of righteousness is to rise, how can anything escape the illumination? If

there is a vestige of the divine likeness in every human being, how is it possible that it should forever be denied supremacy? If God's redemption has passed upon all humanity, who shall "call any man common or unclean"? If freedom to achieve the best and highest destiny be the liberty wherewith Christ has made men free, how shall any remotest corner of the earth continue to harbor any form of slavery, bondage, cruelty and oppression? If ignorance be the degradation of the children of God, and there be such a thing as wisdom, or truth, or knowledge, how shall not the degradation be banished, when the truth has been revealed?

You see how wide is the application of the prophet's words, and how much reason there is, in the nature of things, to hope for their fulfillment. "The glory of the Lord" is to "cover the earth as the waters cover the sea"; and in that day there can be no secular that is not sacred.

Let us not think of this as though it were as yet a condition wholly unrealized. Just to the extent that any life is living, or trying to live, up to the purposes of God, the condition is realized already. Everything in such a life partakes, more or less, of the sacredness of God's purposes; its consecration, though incomplete, is unquestionable. And if it be said that such lives are hard to find, it may certainly

be answered that it is not impossible to find them. It is quite possible to find the people to whom the Apostle is writing when he says, "Whether ye eat, or whether ye drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." It is not conceivable, on any Christian theory, that such a prayer as this should have been uttered in vain, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

It may be indeed that our petitions do not rise to such bold heights as these; but when an Apostle prays, there is nothing too good or great to be asked; and such prayers must have answers. Conscious as every one of us may be how far his own life comes short of this utter and entire consecration, yet the ideal is not wholly unattained, and the standard is that thoroughness which we describe in our common way of speaking, when we declare of a man that he is a Christian, always, everywhere and under all circumstances. All the motives of his conduct are consecrated. They speak with no different voice, whether in church or in business, in the home or on the street. They are inspired with one single thought, the thought of the everlasting right. They speak but one voice, the voice of the everlasting truth;

and in such a life as that, the priest's crown is inscribed with an oracle, and the bells of the horses speak the self-same words: "Holiness unto the Lord."

You will not charge me with exaggeration if I insist that there are such people as this in the world and that they are not hard to find. In truth, I believe there are more of this kind than of the other. I can take you to men whom I know, and probably you can think of many yourselves, whose everyday life, what we call the secular life, is so consecrated to the service of God and man that it blends in a sweet and inspiring harmony with their religious life; whose Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday are on no lower level than their Sunday; and whose Thursday, Friday and Saturday anticipate the coming Day of the Lord.

There is no exaggeration here, and there is no impossibility about it. I should be sorry to think that any of you would entertain any doubt on the subject. The only trouble is that we have forgotten to think of secular things as having any real and true sacredness. We have lost sight of the fact that the same power which keeps the whole earth in its orbit, is at its silent work in binding the stone of the pavement to its resting place. We have forgotten to observe that a man serves God every time he performs an honest action, every time he speaks the

truth, quite as truly as when he says his Creed or sings his hymn.

And when a man's life is planned, on the simple, straightforward determination, always to do the thing that is right, there is no longer anything secular in that life. It is sacred through and through. It may not recognize its own sacredness, it may not acknowledge its own consecration, it may not use the language of religion: it may even have many a failure, fault, imperfection and sin. Doubtless it will have all these; but, notwithstanding all, it is a holy life, because planned on the religious basis. God owns it, and it is a life which has, written upon every part of it, "Holiness unto the Lord." In every nation, so it is written, "He that worketh righteousness is accepted of God." I will not be the man who will attempt to limit the broad reaches of these words. God forbid that I should! I would not dare to confine or narrow the measures of abundant hope which they convey. God's kingdom may be far more numerously populated than we sometimes suppose.

But, it may be asked, if God is going to accept as His own every life that works righteousness, that is to say, every life that does what is right, what is to be said of those institutions and observances which we call especially religious? Why should such a man at-

tend church, for example? Why should he be a communicant? Why not content himself, as so many do, with a right life in the world, a good character and a blameless reputation? What need is there for anything more than these?

Oh, there are so many answers to this question, one hesitates only to think which he may choose. Let us pass by such answers as regard the nature and authority of the Holy Church itself, as a divine institution; let us leave out of sight for the moment the fact that the Church is the body of Christ, which unites us to one another and to Him; which links us with the children of God in ages gone by and with all the hosts of heaven; let us think only of the Church from our own standpoint and on its merely human side. What answer to our question do we find? Clearly this: that the man whose life is planned on the purpose to do always that which is right, ought to let that purpose find some other expression beside the mere conduct of business, pleasure or politics; and the Church provides that mode of expression. That is why, from his own standpoint, every good man should be a Churchman, a communicant in the Church, deeply interested in the affairs of the Church, and regularly attending upon its worship. At least that is one reason, and a good one.

For, consider a moment: this is the noblest

use a man can make of his life, the divinest thing he can do. "He hath shewed thee, Oh, man, what is good, and what doth the Lord, thy God, require, but to do justly, to love mercy, and"—let us not forget the rest of it—"to walk humbly with thy God."

The bells of the horses in such a life, it is true, have inscribed upon them, "Holiness unto the Lord." The secular itself is sacred, but what about the priest's crown? Should any life be wanting in that, and call itself complete? What if there be so much in the royal make-up of a man, that the secular does not tell it all? What if there be aspirations in the human breast which business and pleasure, art and society, literature and science, do not satisfy? What if there be longings in the human heart for a calm and peaceful rest, somewhere, out of hearing of the secular; where the jingling bells of the horses give place, for a time, to the voices which can speak to the deeper depths of the heart and the soul? What if there be such a thing as a conscience in a man, which accuses him of having sometimes turned traitor to his own right purposes? What if a man sometimes needs forgiveness or help, what then?

It seems to me that it is well, then, to have access, not as a stranger, but as a member of the household, to that shrine where the family gather round the hearthstone, or to that

Temple where stands one whom God Himself hath appointed, to give answer to the heart's complaint, to encourage the deeper desires of the human soul, and upon whose priestly crown are inscribed those words which tell not only the sacredness of the secular and temporal life, but something also, of the dignity and glory of the life divine and eternal.

It seems to me that it is well for any life that seeks to live aright, that it can have, and that it should have, expression, not only in everyday affairs, but also in the voice of that worship which is the music of the soul, its aspiration and its joy.

Can a man be fond of his children and only show it by working for them? Must he not love to have them about him? Can a man be a patriot and manifest it only by the ordinary life of a citizen? Does he never want to sing the songs of the fatherland? Does his soul never swell with hope for his country, nor tremble with fear for her future? Dimly perhaps, but still truly, these questions suggest the reason why the child of God, the citizen of heaven, must find his place in the Father's house, and fasten his thought on the fatherland. And when to all these thoughts are added the thought which we omitted, of all that the life must gain from dwelling in the Temple which is the house of God and the company of the faith-

ful, divinely instituted, then surely there is overwhelming answer for our question why the man whose purposes are right and whose aims are true, should find himself nourished, inspired and kept true to his principles, by all that comes to him straight from God, through religion and the Holy Church. And by all that such men can bring, and ought to bring, to the help of the Church, in the way of strength and influence on the side of Christ and His sacred cause in the world, their place is here!

There happens now and then in human life some extraordinary instance of exalted consecration. Some hero does a valorous deed whose telling thrills the heart. Taking his life in his hands, risking death and more than death, he moves undaunted to the performance of his task. The deed is done; but captivity adds its weary days of suspense to the anxiety that follows. At length an exchange is made, the ranks of the enemy open and the hero returns. The grave gives back its dead, the prison restores its captive. Then what acclamations ring out! What tumultuous joy speaks the eager desire to honor the brave!

But far away, at the old home, a mother's heart is yearning, and who shall describe the moment when that mother and son stand face to face? A sacred silence draws its curtain, a silence that can be felt. The place whereon

they stand is holy ground, and there is no humblest part in all the land, no proudest palace in the nation's wide domain that is not thrilled. Nothing but the language of religion can describe it. One voice, one thought, one rapture divine seeks expression, and finds it in the ancient words, "Holiness unto the Lord."

And if such exaltations can come to our common life, showing the capability of mankind to appreciate the illustrious deed of one heroic soul, let it not be thought an idle dream of God's prophet that he dares to tell us the time will come when everything shall wear the token of triumphant consecration from the priest's crown to the horses' bells; one mighty purpose, one holy consecration entering into everything; and Jerusalem itself all golden with the holy presence of God!

CUMULATIVE TESTIMONY;

OR NATHANIEL'S SURPRISE

“Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.”—St. John, i: 50.

Nathaniel is the person to whom this promise was made; and the story is in part familiar; having also a part which commonly escapes attention.

Jesus saw Nathaniel coming toward Him one day, in earnest conversation with Philip. Philip was arguing to convince him that in Jesus of Nazareth had been found the promised Messiah. Nathaniel was quoting a proverb, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” At this point he hears the Saviour speaking of him, in words that are calculated to arrest his attention: “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.”

Without stopping to disclaim the honor thus ascribed, Nathaniel expresses surprise that Jesus should know him and be able to speak of him as though He understood his character. “Whence knowest thou me?” Jesus answered,

“When thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.”

Now this reply would be wholly insufficient to account for Nathaniel’s immediate change from doubt to belief, unless there was something in the circumstance of his having been under the fig-tee, which is not told. A moment ago, he had been arguing against the faith of Philip; and now, instantly, upon the simple statement of our Lord, “When thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee,” he cries out in the enthusiasm of a sudden belief, “Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.” What was it that had converted him?

If we suppose, as most Bible readers do, that Nathaniel had been standing under some way-side tree as Jesus passed by, there certainly is nothing in that fact to explain the saying of our Lord, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.” Anyone might have seen him, and might have judged from his appearance that he was a respectable Jew, of blameless life. But, on the supposition that there was something in the circumstance which is not mentioned, the faith which instantly takes the place of doubt may be explained.

It has been surmised, therefore (for this is not original with me), that the fig-tree was not in sight; that it was in some retired place, and that Nathaniel had gone thither as the custom

of devout Israelites often led them to do, that he might spend the time in prayer or meditation. Alone and unobserved he prays in secret to the God who openly rewards. In silent communion with his God, he opens his heart and pours out his supplication. No doubt his thoughts dwell upon the hopes, always uppermost in the Hebrew mind, of his people Israel and their longings for a king, who shall restore the former glory to their ancient race. After a time he comes out from his retirement beneath the fig-tree; and presently he meets Philip who has been looking everywhere for him, and who tells him, as if in continuance of his own thoughts, "We have found him! We have found him, of whom Moses and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." "Impossible!" the proud-hearted Israelite replies. "How can it be? Nazareth? Absurd! Why, you know the proverb, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

And so they argue, as they walk along, and then Nathaniel hears the voice of Jesus, as He looks upon him and says, "Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile." No stain of Nazareth's unholy reputation rests upon him. He is through and through an Israelite, and blameless under the law. Surprised at this tribute from a stranger, Nathaniel asks the perfectly natural question, "Whence knowest thou me?"

Then comes the answer, which, if our supposition be true, accounts for all that follows: "When thou wast under the fig-tree, when thou hadst betaken thyself to prayer, with none to behold thee, apart from the world, in silent communion with the God of Israel, when thou didst pour out thy supplication to Him, with no human ear to hear, and no human eye to behold—I saw thee!"

It is enough; a mighty wave of conviction rolls over the heart of that Israelite; a sudden illumination breaks upon the darkness of his soul; "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel!"

And so we have reached our text at last: "Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

The Master treats as of comparative unimportance, the circumstance which had been enough to convert Nathaniel from a skeptic to a believer. And yet, because he, an Israelite indeed, had yielded to that circumstance, therefore the way was open which should lead to most abundant satisfaction, even to that fulfillment of Jacob's dream wherein Christ Himself shall be seen to be the ladder uniting earth

and Heaven and on Him ascending and descending angels, bearing up to Heaven the prayers of the faithful, and bringing down to earth the answers to their prayers.

One step beyond the threshold of the Temple of God overwhelms the soul with conviction; but beyond the threshold a glory lies that is greater than this. One single answer to prayer is an amazement to our faith; but there is no limit to the wonders that wait for the spiritual understanding to perceive them.

This accumulation of testimony is always a characteristic of truth; take it in whatsoever field or department you will. If you have come upon a principle you shall find its applications universal. If it be possible to reason from the finite to the infinite, it must be done in this way. This, indeed, is the Saviour's own argument, when He makes human fatherhood the means of illustrating the Fatherhood of God. "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?"

See how the testimony accumulates in the underlying principles of duty, for example. Duty is something due; when it is done, the sense of satisfaction that follows changes duty to delight. And that satisfaction is the pledge of a principle. Because this little, simple piece

of work, this kind word, this "cup of cold water in the name of a disciple," brought such a reward, are you encouraged to keep on? Be of good cheer, "Thou shalt see greater things than these." Thou shalt see the unnumbered multitude of duties that wait for thy coming, not as one sometimes sees them, as a burden too heavy to bear; but as the fulfillment of thy life's highest joy, the truest satisfaction of all thy waiting powers.

See the cumulative testimony of endurance. How often we find, and how often we hear people saying, that we never know how much we can bear until we are called on to bear it. There speaks the principle, and there speaks experience. Because God's hand was over you and His loving protection sheltered you, were you able to go through the trouble that seemed more than you could bear? Be of good courage! God has pledged you His aid for every possible need; "Thou shalt see greater things than these." As thy days, thy strength shall be, and thou shalt see the growth of a power in thyself which "Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

See the cumulative testimony of faith, that very promise which was made to Nathaniel. The great mysteries of faith loom up around us; they stand, like mountain-summits, on the horizon of thought. How shall we master

them? How shall our comprehension grasp such mighty realities as these: the wonder of the God Incarnate, the mystery of the Atonement, the marvel of the Resurrection, the secret of God's Triune Existence? What can we do? What can we say, when the splendors of the Faith reveal themselves to us, and we know there is not room enough in our poor life and in our contracted thought to entertain them?

Again the answer comes with strong assurance and abundant encouragement. Take the beginnings of faith and let them grow. Start with what you can believe and, "Thou shalt see greater things than these." Consider the familiar mysteries, they pledge the abundance of those that yet wait for the growth of your comprehension. "Consider the lilies of the field;" their wayside beauty is the earnest of the glorious resurrection! "Consider the fowls of the air;" they pledge God's everlasting providence.

Yes, consider your own life. "Because I said unto thee, I saw thee," or "I will give thee rest," or "I will give thee the water of life"—because I have said unto thee such things as these and thou hast found them true, canst thou not trust and believe Me further? "Thou shalt see greater things than these." Thou shalt mount on eagles' wings to the tableland of faith's most glorious mountain summit.

There shalt thou "run and not be weary; there shalt thou walk and not faint."

Sometimes people tell me the reasons of their faith; and I marvel to think how small a portion of the beauty and riches of Christ has come to them, and yet how much it means. How vast the unexplored wealth of their inheritance which yet lies before them, and yet how they prize the little they have received! One man tells me that he was drawn to worship by the simplicity of the Prayer Book. Another, that his heart was fired with the elaborate splendor of some gorgeous ritual which seemed to him like a vision of heaven itself; a third, that he was touched by the tenderness of some sweet hymn which sang in his soul like the voices of angels; and another, that the story of some saintly life took possession of him and would not let him go; and so on; we are not all influenced alike; we are not all moved by the same appeals; but in each of these instances, and in all that are like them, men resemble a stranger standing on the border of a mighty continent. Oh, that they might hear the voice of the King, bidding them welcome, and calling them to "Come up higher; ye shall see greater things than these."

His service is simple, that is true; His yoke is easy; His ritual may be royal or otherwise; His Prayer Book is peerless, His true servants

are faithful and His songs are the songs of the redeemed; but, "Thou shalt see greater things than these," "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty, they shall behold the land of great extent."

"When thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee. When thou wast mindful of my poor, I beheld thee. When thou didst suffer I was near thee; when thou didst lift up thy heart in My temple, I heard thee. When thou didst pass through the valley of the shadow of death I was with thee."

Let not these things occasion surprise. It is well if they have taught us only the alphabet of faith, only the keynote of the heavenly music; but they are the pledge of more to come. Hereafter, we are told, we shall "see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of man."

For the fullness of the meaning of that vision we can only wait, and hope, and pray, and work, for

"I know not, O I know not,
What joys await us there,
What radiancy of glory,
What bliss beyond compare!"

LOOKING BACKWARD;

FORGIVE AND FORGET

“Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”—Phil., iii: 13, 14.

It is obvious that these words may be taken in a variety of ways. If they stood alone, with nothing in the context to explain them, we might give them the largest possible interpretation, and find in them counsel which would be helpful to us as a Nation. To forget the things that are past might refer to that larger life of the commonwealth of Israel, wherein God's chosen people must have found many things they would like to forget, as well as much that was calculated to exalt them and make them proud of themselves.

But there had come the breaking down of the middle wall between Jew and Gentile. St. Paul himself says in another place, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for ye are

all one in Christ Jesus.” In this larger apprehension of the world-wide meaning of the spiritual Israel St. Paul may have found himself called upon to forget the glories, the triumphs, the failures and successes of that past history of his nation which he, as a leader of the Hebrews, must have held in such familiar knowledge as to render it difficult for him in this interpretation of the words to forget “the things that were behind.”

Only as it was given to him to see the vision of God’s ancient promises fulfilled in a universal fulfillment and His Spirit “poured out upon all flesh,” could he reconcile himself to the duty which lay before him as the great Apostle to the Gentiles. And yet he must have seen the future so far more glorious than the past that whatever wrench there was to his sensibilities, in tearing himself away from the cherished memories of Israel’s greatness, it must have been more than compensated for by the ever widening horizon into which the new exodus was to lead the children of Israel, even a greater and brighter land of promise than ever dawned upon Israel’s ancient leader out of the wilderness.

And yet, with all its suggestions to us, citizens of this American Republic, of the duties which attend that larger conception of our National responsibilities which has come in recent

years with the widening of our own horizon; and valuable as such suggestions may be, I do not think St. Paul referred to the history of Israel at all, in the words of our text.

There was another conception of the past which may have been in his thoughts and which may well be in ours, if, instead of finding in them an allusion to the State, we interpret them as referring to God's ancient Church. There are pages and chapters in Ecclesiastical History, bloodstained with the blood of the martyrs, blurred with the tears of those who have suffered as victims of man's intolerant bigotry and prejudice, pages and chapters most regrettable, which one would gladly forget if he could, and to the memory of which one can only be reconciled by believing that then, as always, God was making "the wrath of men to praise Him," and that the brighter day of emancipation into the fullness of our present religious liberty, was hastened to its dawning by the groans and tears of those who looked forward to the coming dawn and saw it not.

Not all pages, however, in that history can be so described. There were saints as well as sinners, giants and heroes, gentle women, meek and patient people, happy little children, bright-eyed youths and maidens in those elder days; and we may not rightly exaggerate the terrible deeds which stained the ancient record.

We, too, may look upon the history of the Christian Church, as it has been unfolded through the centuries, with a feeling that there is much therein we would be glad to forget; but more, far more, which our memories love to cherish. We venerate but do not adore the past. Things are not true and beautiful because they are old, nor is antiquity always the guarantee of excellence. Only that which was true from the beginning is true to-day; and yet, again, there is a duty resting upon the Church to forget the past with all its triumphs, with all its glories, its misconceptions and mistakes, and reach toward a better prize than any it has won.

Nothing can more surely result in paralyzing the Church's vital energy and rendering her helpless before the living problems of the day, than to be standing ever with backward gaze in self-stultifying regard for "the things that are behind." It were better for her to forget her history, glorious and inspiring as some chapters of it are, than to forget her destiny and her duty to the ages yet unborn. If she is God's Church, she inhabits the everlasting Now; and the voice of her King calls out to her to "live in the living present" and "let the dead past bury its dead." There are hearts that are sorrowing; there are human beings who are denied their rights; there are little

children "crying for the light, and with no language but a cry," there are men in Macedonia, calling, "Come over and help us." It is to the Church's own danger and peril of losing her crown if she fails to hear and heed these voices; if she be content to rest in a serene satisfaction, gazing on the laurels of her apostolic past, or bound with mediæval limitations to the neglect of these voices which call her, and of that other Voice which bids her, "Awake, thou that sleepest, arise from the dead; and Christ shall give thee light."

It is well if the Church and we members of it do find such an interpretation as this to connect with St. Paul's determination; and yet I do not think that this was what he had in mind.

If we remember that he was writing to the Philippians, where he had established a parish or mission, where he had received much kindness and much persecution, I think we shall see in his words something far more personal than either of the interpretations we might otherwise place upon them.

There is no one of St. Paul's Epistles which contains so many expressions of loving tenderness as this one. Everywhere he seems to be taking into his confidence those Philippians to whom he is writing, and the words of our text are no exception. It must have been something in his own past which he was now de-

terminated to forget. It may have been the injuries he had received; and in that case the lesson is a personal one. Many a man and woman to-day is saying, "I can forgive but I cannot forget," which is equivalent to saying they do not forgive at all. For the only measure of Christian forgiveness is that which we say in our prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us;" and what we are asking in that prayer is that God will blot out of His book of remembrance our transgressions, and forget them, and not lay them up against us, nor remember them any more, but make our sins, "though they be red like crimson, to be like wool, and though they be scarlet" that He will "make them as white as snow." That He will "blot out our transgressions as the morning cloud," and "as the dew when one awaketh."

How dare we say that prayer, and then repeat those other words, "I can forgive but not forget"? You can! You must! for, while it is not possible that any human being should so forgive as to make the past as though it had not been, nor is it possible for any judge upon the bench to forgive the convicted criminal, yet to "love your enemies, to bless them that curse you, to do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you," this is a requirement which never

would have been uttered had it been impossible of fulfilment. Nay, more; this is the divinest thing God ever asks of man; and Jesus proclaims it, out under the open sky when He has led the multitude up the mountain-side and spoken to them such words as never had been heard before, and told them this about forgiveness, which they were to practice, in order as He said, "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."

"But," someone says, "I do not think you realize what you are saying. What do you ministers know about the things which take place in the business world? its sharp competitions, its war to the knife, its jealousies, trickeries, legalized dishonesties, its 'graft' and corruption? What do you mean by asking us, or expecting us, to forgive and forget?" And I answer, The ministers of Christ are not so ignorant of these things as you may suppose, although we may not know it all. We do know this, that the harder it is to forgive and forget, the nearer you men of business will approach to Christ if you heed His words; and it is just because we do know how hard it is, that we urge upon you to put such an interpretation as this upon St. Paul's words; nay, to take Christ Himself as the Pattern, who had far more to forgive than you ever had or are likely to have, and whose dying prayer for His murderers is your

example and mine, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

And yet, I do not think that this was what St. Paul had in mind, when he said he was going to forget the things that were past. It is time now to tell you what I really think he did have in mind; and it seems to me that this is the most helpful interpretation we can possibly give to his words. The thing that always haunted him and clung to his remembrance with the clasp which dead men's hands sometimes fasten around the spar that has failed to save their lives; the awful memory that rises like a specter out of the past, that "will not down," that intrudes itself whenever he writes of his own office or character, is that which befell him as he journeyed on the way from Jerusalem to Damascus, bent upon an errand of destruction; whereof it was written that he "breathing out threatenings and slaughter, had gone with letters to the high priest, that if he found any of this way," that is, of your way and mine as Christians, "he should bring them bound unto Jerusalem." And as he journeyed, the midday shining of the sun was out-done by that supernatural brightness which fell from the cloven sky, and he heard the Voice which now he would give anything in the world if he could forget, the Voice that told him what it meant to persecute the Church, the Voice that

called to him in the old Hebrew tongue, wherein the prophets and the psalmists and the priests of ages past had spoken; and said to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

This, I believe, was what St. Paul was now so anxious to forget; and we know how the memory of it haunted him. For, when he is telling us of the different traits of his own character, you remember he says, "As touching zeal, persecuting the church;" and when he is dwelling upon the dignity of his office, you remember he says, with self-reproach and abasement, "I that am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church."

It may be that you and I have much with which to reproach ourselves for having done so little for the Church, for having so often neglected the Church and absented ourselves from its services, and stayed our hands from its world-wide missions and its work for the children of men; and it may be we would like to forget, in this particular, "the things that are behind." If so, the words of St. Paul surely give us encouragement, for we have not so much to forgive ourselves and to forget, as he, when he remembered that awful day of his conversion.

I sometimes think it is harder for men to forgive themselves, than it is to forgive other people the wrongs that they have suffered at their

hands. Self-reproach, with its haunting memories, could not, however, withhold St. Paul when God had changed his name and nature so that Saul, the destroyer, became Paul, the up-builder. And the thought I would leave in your hearts to-day, is this: that though you may be a man or a woman "with a past" which you would be glad to bury, you can have a future; you can become a power on the side of Him in whom alone the world can find forgiveness, if you only learn of Him to live according as you pray. In other words, to make this your daily and most earnest entreaty, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive" ourselves and all others "who trespass against us."

It is the glory of His religion that such a life, like such a prayer, is open to every one of us!

CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM

THE FAMILY OF GOD

“Able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.—Eph., iii: 20.

These are splendid words! Let us study them. The Apostle brings before us three great conceptions in this chapter. First, he speaks of the whole family in heaven and earth. That is his conception of the Church. A family, bounded by no narrow definitions, limited by no humanly constructed walls. God's family in heaven and earth. One and undivided, whether so understood by us or not, and comprehending in its membership every baptized member of the body of Christ.

Of the beauty of this conception of the Church, so totally unlike the narrow conceptions which men sometimes entertain, it is not necessary now to speak at length. As Churchmen (which we may take to mean the same as Christians), impatient of any designation which seems to limit our birthright, and equally impatient of any and all devices by which God's

family in any part or portion, seems to be deprived of its place and share in that birthright, we are familiar with that great conception which the Apostle gives us, and naturally we are anxious, or if not we ought to be, to make all other people familiar with it as well.

The second of the three great thoughts is that of God's love in Christ; "That ye may be able to comprehend the breadth and length and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." Here again the widest possible expanse of the subject lies open before us. The infinite love of God extending in every direction, beyond the limits of finite knowledge, in whatsoever dimension it be considered.

And the third conception in the Apostle's mind is that of our text, which tells the greatness of God's power, He is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." The Church of God, the Love of God and the Power of God; and as in both the former, so here, the power is described in terms of its vastness. The Apostle is thinking and writing in large expressions.

Now, I would like to thread these three great thoughts together, or, rather to show you the thread which connects them, if I can; so that the mighty purpose, hope and endeavor to which

they lead may be deepened and strengthened within you. And I shall begin with that last expression which seems almost like an afterthought, as it drops from the pen of the Apostle, "The power that worketh in us."

What is that power? A few lines farther back, we find our answer, in the prayer that God will grant us to be "strengthened with might, by his Spirit in the inner man." And who shall describe the working of that power. Every high attainment of the human character, every good desire, though not wrought out in act; every problem solved in the advancement of humanity, every faintest desire for such advancement, though it find no apparent fruition in actual result—God seems to be looking down upon all such, and saying to us through the Apostle's words, that He is able to fulfill all these desires, that He does fulfill them, according to the power of them in ourselves; that our best success is His work, but that He is able to do far beyond "all that we ask or think"; only that He is doing it, and is going to do it, through His family, and the members of His family, in heaven and in earth; just according to the measure of that power in the family and in the individual.

Now, see how all this applies in regard to the things we hope and ask and think for humanity. Here are problems that press for solution. It

is not too much to say that they are appalling. What is to be done with the great problem of poverty? With the fearful problem of intemperance? With the burning question of fair wages? And of man's just relation with man? What is to be the solution of the problem of sickness? And by that I mean the entire problem of unsanitary conditions in swarming tenement districts as well as in plague-ridden lands where sanitation is unknown. What of the problem of social vice, in higher and lower ranks of society? What of divorce and its menace to the family life? What of the problem of the criminal class and the tramp? In a word, what is the prospect concerning the manifold problems of Christian Socialism? which is only another name for the brotherhood idea of man's related and inter-related life.

In some form or other, the problem meets and confronts us all. Why does God let it exist? we are tempted to ask. If He has the power "to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think," why does He not interpose to help us solve or remove this overwhelming problem, to which so much anxious thought is being given to-day? Well, I reply, He does interpose; but, for reasons of His own, which we can partly understand, and which we must believe are entitled to our reverent respect, He puts a limit on His power. He interposes

through His family, and gives to His children the privilege of partnership in His great designs; and He has spoken to us, through the Apostle's words, of Himself as of One who had chosen to limit the operations of His boundless ability, "According to the power that worketh in us." He works by human agency.

This ought not to surprise us, still less to discourage us, for it is in accordance with His working in all other lines wherein He permits us to coöperate with Him. He will not educate us, as He educates the fox and the fish, without their coöperation; nor will He clothe us as He clothes the birds and the lions, with no effort on their part. Our clothing, our sustenance, our education, our health, our houses, all depend upon our own efforts; and it appears that this is because we are on a higher plane of being and of civilization than the cave-dwellers, the birds of the forest, or the beasts of the field. And so with the social problems. He works by human agency.

But the fact that the children of God care about these problems; the fact that they are at work in any department of human endeavor, is the proof that "His Spirit in the inner man," is going to solve, nay, is solving the problem. The fact that in the Pan-Anglican Congress, this summer of 1908, there was no subject whose

discussion received greater attention and more earnest thought than that of Christian Socialism, I regard as a pledge that the problem is going to be solved, in a manner that goes "far beyond all that we ask or think."

And the reason for all the united or individual effort that is being made for the uplift of humanity, the motive for sending care and ministrations to the sick and needy, the power which establishes hospitals, churches and schools; provides education for the ignorant, punishment for the evil-doer; and tries at least, to secure work for the unemployed, and better relations between labor and capital—the motive for all this, and the power behind it, is brotherly love; and the reason for it is, that people have really begun to know the love which, "in length and breadth and depth and height," is seen to be a love that really is infinite, a love that casts out selfishness and fear, a love that is stronger than death, a "love that passeth knowledge."

And so it is apparent that however vast the problem may be, the power and the motive and the reason for anticipating its solution are vaster and mightier. The thread which binds the Apostle's three great conceptions together, begins to shine out all golden in beauty, promise and fulfillment; for now we turn back to the first

of these things which we have kept to the last; that is to say, the thought of the family of God, His Church.

And what has that conception to do with the problem? I answer, and I wish that I could convince every member of the Church and every man who holds his ministry in the Church's Holy Orders, that the very life of the Church depends upon this answer being realized; I answer that the Church has everything to do with the problem. For, in the Apostle's idea, which is the only right idea of the Church, and family of God, two things are what it represents, embodies and stands for, and those two things are the solution of all the problems of Christian Socialism; namely the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man.

Only think of it—what is it to make a man a member of the Church, and make him realize that he is, thereby, the child of God in a nearer covenant relation than he was before; and brought into brotherly relations with every other member of the family? It is to fill that man with new hope, new ambition and self-respect. It is to make his life worth living, and to pledge to him the sympathy and help and encouragement and consideration he needs, to meet life's requirements. What is it to care for humanity; to sympathize with its sadness and try to lift its burdens? What, indeed, but

to show "the love that passeth knowledge?"

Let no man tell me this is Utopian, dangerous or impossible. It is none of these things, for it is simply the working out of that infinite love which is the power that is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think"; and in its perfect working lies the hope of solving all the problems that concern humanity, whereby all mankind shall be brought into God's family, and every man a brother.

To make all this a practical thing, not too small for a whole congregation to carry home with them, nor yet too large for every individual to find his part in helping on, this is the great need at present of the Church and its members, to cultivate a larger, more devout and more intelligent Churchmanship, approaching the apostolic model, the ideal of God's family in heaven and earth. Secondly, to know more and show more of the love of God "which passeth knowledge," and thirdly, to trust more entirely in the all-comprehending power of God.

Not to look on the needs of humanity with any feeling of despair. Never that! But with unquenchable faith and hope. Yes, believing and hoping that He will do above our highest conception, "according to the power that worketh in us." Little it may be that anyone single-handed can accomplish; but let a congregation realize the power of God in themselves,

and who shall set the limit to the result! If there were in this congregation, in all its members, as much earnestness as there is in some, who can tell what this parish could accomplish for this city?

Let two congregations compete with one another, "provoking unto love and good works." Let a Diocese or a Missionary District catch the infection of a holy crusade against the ills that need correction, and for the good work that needs the doing; let the Church, in all the length and breadth of the Nation, rise to the same conception of her power, and put forth the effort of that power "that worketh in us," and there will be seen an answer to the prayer of our soul for mankind, that shall justify the splendid saying of the Apostle in our splendid text!

But it must all begin with the individual. Every Christian must begin at his own heart, and realize his own responsibility. Everyone must put new faith into the old words and realize that God's kingdom will come when His will is "done on earth as it is in heaven."

We have been "high" Churchmen and forgotten to be humble. We have been "low" Churchmen and lost sight of our royal priesthood. We have been "broad" Churchmen and not always deep and devout. What we need is the length and breadth and depth and height which constitutes the only true Church-

manship. In the Apostle's vision of the Church it was "a city let down from heaven to earth," having all four dimensions; and it stood four square, with a message and a welcome for mankind from the four corners of the earth. May our Churchmanship take on such dimensions as that, for that is what I understand by Christian Socialism and the solving of the Problems.

WHO TOUCHED ME?

OR THE GARMENT OF CHRIST

“And Jesus said, Who touched me?”—St. Luke, viii: 45.

The incident of which this question forms a part is familiar to us all. Still, it may be of service to recall it.

Our Lord was on His way to the house of Jairus whose daughter was sick. The ruler had called Him to come and help her; and as He went down the street of Jerusalem, on His errand of mercy, He was attended by a multitude. One can fairly see them crowding upon Him, and hear the murmur of their voices as they move along. Suddenly Jesus stops, and His question rings out above the confusion, “Who touched me?” Nearest to Him stood Peter and James and John, the three who always seem to have been His closest attendants; and now Peter, always ready to speak first and think afterward, takes Him to task for His strange question, “Master,” he says, “the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?”

Disregarding the implied reproof, the Saviour says, "Someone hath touched me, for I perceive that the healing power has gone forth upon its work," or as His words stand recorded, "I perceive that virtue is gone out of me." While thus they stand talking together, let us lead up to the incident from another starting point.

There was in the city a certain woman who had a disease which rendered her not only an object of aversion but which so drew around her the wall of separation from other people that her touch was legal defilement; that is to say, whoever came in contact with her, must go to the priest and obtain ceremonial cleansing. For many years this condition had existed and she had spent her fortune upon physicians without relief. Her determination to seek for help from Jesus seems to have been a last resort; and as she goes to carry her resolution into effect we may in imagination follow her. See how timidly she goes through the streets, avoiding observation, shrinking from the passers-by. See how through some narrow side street she enters upon the passing multitude, feeling her way into the increasing density, little by little, and edging gradually nearer to Him who is the center of the passing throng.

Then perhaps there flashes upon her remembrance, as she thinks what it may mean for her

if she may touch the Saviour, that her touch will bring a stain upon Him. She must not do it; and then she says within herself, "Though I must not bring defilement upon Him, yet still I must have His help, and if I may touch, not Him, but the hem of His garment, He will suffer no harm, and I shall be healed." Nearer and nearer she draws to Him as she says these words within herself, and finally, reaching out "lame hands of faith" between the closely-pressed people of the throng, touches the border of His robe, and instantly she knows herself to be cured!

Just as she is about to make her escape, hoping that her daring act has not been discovered, there rings out that question, uttered by the Master, "Who touched me?" And she knows that she is discovered. Then comes the frightened thought, "What will become of me? What will He do to me? He says I have touched Him—then I must have brought defilement upon Him. Will He send upon me the blighting blast of His displeasure? Will he bring upon me some fearful punishment?"

Meanwhile, the conversation between our Lord and Peter has been going on; and again she hears the Saviour say, "Someone hath touched me, for I perceive the working of my healing power in operation"; and she knows herself discovered, though it may be that some-

thing in the tone with which our Saviour speaks, gives her courage to think it best to throw herself upon His mercy. At all events that is what she does; trembling and afraid, she falls at His feet, and confesses her act.

And what does He do? What would He be sure to do, under circumstances such as these? He who has said, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Not one word of reproof does He utter, not one word of criticism, severity, nor reproach, but bids her be of good comfort, calls her "Daughter," and sends her home, rejoicing for the rest of her days, with the new life and health which have come to her.

It is worthy of remark that though our Saviour said or implied that she had touched Him, she really had only touched the hem of His garment. For there is a multitude thronging and pressing upon Him in every land to-day. In that multitude are many, actuated only from curiosity or by a desire to pass the time, but among them also are they who are earnestly seeking Him because they need His healing touch. What would they not give, what would you not give, my friend, my brother, my sister, if you could hear His words, see Him as He moved along the street, or touch, even though it were but the hem of His garment?

If it were known with absolute certainty that Jesus of Nazareth were going to be walk-

ing under the beautiful overhanging elms of Washington Street to-morrow morning at ten o'clock, who could number the multitude that would be there? The public square would not contain them, nor all the adjacent streets. And the density of the throng in His immediate vicinity would be indescribable. Is there anyone here who would miss the opportunity? I am quite sure we would all be there. The news of what was going to happen would spread to all the surrounding towns and villages, and each would send as many of its people as could reach the spot.

For there is in everyone of us, and in every human being in all the world, the need of Him, which no other can satisfy or supply; and we would be saying, as all mankind must be saying, as it thinks of its sins, its sickness, its burdens or its sorrows, "If I may touch but the hem of His garment, if I may lay my hand in His, if I may hear His blessed words, I shall be whole!"

Not less real than the touch of that poor woman in Jerusalem may be our touch, dear friends, if we but bear in mind that we have the garment of Christ, and our touching of its hem may be recognized by Him as touching Himself, with all the healing and comfort, help, strength and inspiration it would imply. For He has identified Himself, He still identifies Himself,

and He will, in the judgment day, identify Himself with His Church!

Saul, we are told, was persecuting the Church, but Jesus said, "Why persecutest thou me?" He sent His ministry out into the world and told them, "He that heareth you heareth Me." He told of the judgment that is to come, when He shall declare, "Inasmuch as ye did it, or did it not, unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did, or did it not to me."

We know very well that the Church is not Christ, that baptism and the Holy Communion are not Christ; and yet, if He identifies Himself with them, as He identified Himself in the olden days with the garments He wore, it is worth our while to remember that we shall be touching Him in touching these. We shall be helping forward His work if we do what we can for His Church. We shall be neglecting Him if we turn our backs on that which enshrines Him as His garment, and if we turn our feet away from His Holy Habitation which He hath chosen to place His name there.

We may find Him, if we need Him, where he has promised to be. "Where two or three are gathered" in His name, there is He in the midst; and it is as true to-day as ever it was, "him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Is it not absolutely astonishing in view of this promise, in view of our need of it, and in

view of the way in which it is possible of fulfillment, that so many people will permit themselves to be deprived of the healing touch of Jesus, for any consideration whatever? and that they will offer the flimsy pretexts and excuses, which one cannot dignify with the name of reasons, for failure to take Him at His word!

Ah, my friends, more really than if we saw Him walking down our streets, for our senses sometimes deceive us, more really than if we heard His voice with our outward ears, His assurance is given unto us, that He is here, here in a special way and for the special purpose of blessing and of helping us who need, waiting for us to lay hold upon Him, expecting and rewarding our touch upon the hem of His garment, if only we do it in faith.

Yes, He is here. We have gathered in His name. We have kept our part of the engagement, He will not be wanting in His. Yes, He is here, and blessed assurance, we know it is true, He is still "able to be touched with the feeling of our infirmities."

THE FOOL

A MEDITATION

“The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.”—Psalm, liii:1.

We should be careful how we call anyone a fool; not only because people are apt to resent it, nor because of the penalty which our Saviour has pronounced upon those who use that expression; but because we are liable to be mistaken; and, in human language, vituperation does not convince.

It is true that the word occurs a number of times in Holy Scripture. Solomon uses it, St. Paul uses it, and our Saviour Himself makes use of it. But we cannot claim inspiration for our language, and should therefore be all the more on our guard. The Prayer Book version of the Psalms, you remember, softens the expression of our text, and says: *“The foolish body hath said in his heart, There is no God,”* but this is not for the purpose of modifying the force of the statement but only because the Prayer Book version was written for singing

purposes, to which the King James version does not lend itself.

We are at liberty, however, to consider the bearing upon a man's intellectual being of such an attitude as is implied in the denial of the existence of God. I am aware that it is commonly understood that at the present day there are no atheists; but at the same time, I think there are a great many people of whom it is true to say that they are living as though God was "not in all their thoughts," and of whom it may not uncharitably be said that they are, to all intent and purposes, "without God, and having no hope in the world." What may have brought about such an attitude or condition is not to the present purpose. Some might say that they were born without the religious sense; that, I understand was Darwin's position; and I understand also that he expressed regret that it was so. Others may have reached this condition through disappointment or bitter experience of one sort or another. I aim to show that no man can take the position of practical denial of the existence of God without doing violence to his own intelligence; which is a round-about way of saying what the text says with so much bluntness.

I was led to think of the words of the text quite unexpectedly on one occasion, when the words were fairly forced from my lips. The oc-

casation was one day when I was riding over the road which passes from Ponce to Arecibo, directly across the Island of Porto Rico. I do not think any man passing over that road could open his eyes and look about him without a deeply religious conviction; unless his intellectual nature had either failed to act in the usual way, or unless intelligence were lacking.

You leave the city of Ponce, and for three or four miles you travel upon almost a level road; then you begin gently to ascend, and the road which has been straight, begins to take beautiful curves as the ascent grows steeper. Soon the wealth of tropical vegetation closes in on every side, and under the overhanging boughs you ascend more rapidly until as the road winds around the breast of some overhanging mountain, you look far down into the valley below, where the feathery plumes of the sugar-cane fields lie spread out like a carpet of emerald green, bordered with banana groves and pierced here and there with cocoa palms and royal palms; dotted with bright splashes of color where some tropical flower lifts its gorgeous head; tinged here and there with cactus plants and the deeper green of palmetto leaves; while, through the leafy groves across the valley, you catch the distant gleam of some tiny cataract showing the mountain streamlet as it goes hurrying down to the sea.

On and on you keep your way, up the mountains, across the plains, ever winding, ever ascending; until you find yourself in the heart of a solitude which impresses you with the feeling that it has been, ages upon ages, hiding its glory from the sight of man; and where the gigantic crags stand like sentinels, guarding the treasure on every side but one; and through the wide opening toward the south, you look across the long reaches of country you have passed; and beyond all its bewildering splendor, you see shining in the distance, like a silver plain, the waters of the Caribbean Sea.

It was when that vision burst upon my view, with its overwhelming message, with its imperious demand for an explanation of how it came to be there, that I could not resist the conviction, nor can I resist it now, that to deny to such a picture the hand of an Artist greater than all the masters, would be to deny my own intelligence; and there almost burst from my lips the words of our text, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." No other, in such a presence, could say it!

I have encountered people who have been unable to conceal the pity with which they regarded any man who entertains the convictions and the principles of a religious faith. So far as I am concerned, such pity is wasted. If it be a weakness to follow what seems only the

logical working of the intelligence, and to say that such glories as lie spread out upon the wonderful face of Nature, in full dress, and in her gorgeous attire are the work of a God who knows the laws of beauty and, knowing, spreads out those glories where the human eye may find them with rejoicing—if this be a weakness, I say, so be it. I accept the criticism, while at the same time, I cannot escape the conviction that no other conclusion than that which I have reached, is possible for the rightly-working intelligence.

And as I meditated along this line of thought, the common answer came to my mind; and I remembered how people sometimes think they have escaped what seems to be the logical conclusion, that creation demands a Creator, by calling attention to the insignificance of this world itself, in the boundless spaces of the universe, and among the millions of planets, stars and systems, in whose countless multitude this whole earth is less than the smallest grain of sand by the wayside. And again I fail to see how such a thought can lead to the denial of the existence of a supreme Being, of infinite intelligence, power and love.

On the contrary, it seems to me, that if the limited glories of that beautiful picture which lay spread out upon my view, as I climbed the Porto Rican road, suggested thoughts of God,

then the unlimited glories of the boundless universe only proclaim their Author to be infinite. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork." In yonder Caribbean Sea are depths where lie strewn myriads of tiny shells that look no more than grains of sand as you hold them in the hollow of your hand; yet each one is as perfect and beautiful, when you place it under the revealing power of the microscope, as though it had been carved by the hand of the most skillful and painstaking sculptor. "They that go down to the sea . . . behold his wonders in the deep." In yonder leafy grove are millions of leaves and blossoms, and everyone a perfect thing of beauty, such as no artist can rival. Shall I be thought illogical, if, as I look about me upon "the prodigality of nature," I say to myself, "I am in the studio of the infinite Artist; I know the tokens of His handiwork though I may not see Him here?" It seems to me only the illogical, disjointed, irrational working of a disordered unintelligence, that could look about upon the visible world and say, as he saw what it has to show, and heard what it has to speak of power divine, of wisdom infinite, "There is no God."

And then I pass on to other considerations, and I think of myself. If I have within me, as every man with intelligence has, the power to

appreciate and to read the plain handwriting of Nature's Author so that there comes to my mind a message, like that which comes from the printed page, am I the illogical one if I decide that books always imply authors? or is he lacking in intelligence who reads the open face of Nature's book and says it is anonymous, it came into being without an author!

At this point, I shall be called one-sided, and it will be said that I am leaving out half of the evidence; that I am, in my summing up, including only the testimony which is favorable to my foregone conclusion. How about earthquakes, famines and pestilences? Were these mountains never swept by a Porto Rican cyclone? How do you account for sickness and calamity? Are you wise in leaving out of your picture everything that is ugly? And I answer No, I should not be wise, nor fair, if I did; but these things seem to me, the more I think of them, to indicate that God, on the supposition that there is a God, is determined that we shall not grow so accustomed to the beautiful abiding-place where we are tarrying, that we not only become indifferent to its beauty, but come to regard it as our permanent residence; whereas it is only a rented house and we are pilgrims whose home has not been reached, for this is not our rest.

This may not be His entire purpose in permitting the ugly side of nature to exist, but it cer-

tainly does not disprove His existence if there are such things as impress upon us the irresistible conviction to which such an argument must lead the rightly-working intelligence; viz., not only that there is a God who is supreme in His universe, but that He will not allow His children to forget His existence.

In other words, the very things which are sometimes urged as disproving the existence of God, seem to me to add strength to the proof, or rather to the indications of His existence. For after all, the existence of God can never be absolutely demonstrated apart from the revelation in Christ Jesus; the most we can say is that it is a reasonable certainty, and that no other conclusion is rational and consistent with human intelligence. I cannot help thinking the more I follow the line which has now been suggested, that it furnishes only another reason for thinking that, after all, the psalmist is right in the plain-spoken words of our text.

Of course, the psalmist wrote without the strongest argument in favor of his proposition; for that argument came hundreds of years later, when in the little town of Bethlehem, there was born of David's line one in whom the revelation of God was complete. But if David thought so poorly of the man who denied the evidence which was so imperfect before the coming of Christ, one cannot help wondering what words

would have expressed his opinion of the man who living in the twentieth century and enjoying the accumulated benefits of Christian civilization, should say, by act if not by word, "There is no God."

I am free to confess that it may incapacitate me to judge fairly of men whose attitude is that which I have described, when I find in myself the evidence of what is sometimes called a theological prejudice. I wish to be absolutely fair, but I am afraid I am not always so; for I cannot banish from my mind what seems to be the feeling expressed in the words of the psalmist; a feeling of indignation which ought never to enter into theological discussion, but which does lie at the root of all controversy, and which makes so much bitterness between the adherents of different theological opinions. The psalmist says in effect that the man who denies the existence of God is a fool, and neither the psalmist nor anyone else can make use of such language, except as the expression of more or less indignation and scorn.

It is my desire to avoid any such feeling; and while, as I have said, it is extremely difficult to treat fairly the man who seems to deal unfairly with himself, yet, I am profoundly moved with an entirely different feeling from that of indignation or scorn, when I think of the man who is living without God, or trying to live as if there

were no God. My feeling, if I am not profoundly mistaken, toward such a man, is the feeling of sorrow and of pity for the sophistry, and for the infinite loss which that man's life must suffer; loss of direction, loss of ambition, loss of animating purpose, loss of hope, yes, loss of life itself!

For I believe the words are profoundly true which St. Paul in Athens quotes from the heathen poets, "We are His offspring," and "In Him we live, and move, and have our being."

AN APOLOGY:

ST. PAUL'S PARENTHESIS

“I speak after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of your flesh.”—Rom., vi:19.

These words are an apology and more than an apology. They are parenthetical and indicate that St. Paul is finding difficulty in expressing his thought. He sees himself almost betrayed by the use of figurative language into a statement which was required by the exigencies of his sentence, but which does not satisfy the requirements of truth. You can easily trace the steps by which he has come to this perplexity if you will start from his first use of the metaphor and follow him.

He has been saying that sin is bondage, and that the sinner is a slave. That is his original proposition. Then he goes on to argue, “Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants (or slaves) to obey, his servants (or slaves) ye are, to whom ye obey? Whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness?” Thus there creeps in, apparently un-

noticed, the inference or suggestion that when the slavery of sin is broken, a man becomes subject to the slavery of righteousness, that the bondage of disobedience is simply exchanged for the bondage of obedience. "Being then made free from sin ye became the servants (or slaves) of righteousness." There the inconsistency seems to strike him. Obedience can be bondage only when it is rendered to an evil power; and the service of God is perfect freedom. Still, having used the words he will not go back and erase them. He is too eager in the rush of his thought for that; nor will he even stop to change the form of the words. He will let them stand; but in order that he may not be thought unmindful of their bearing, he throws in an apology by way of parenthesis and hurries on, as a man pressed for time, yet anxious to finish his letter.

It is as if he had said what his words imply: "I see I have laid myself open to misconstruction, but you must not put too much stress on the mere words; I speak after the manner of men. I called sin slavery so I had to call righteousness slavery too; but that was only because of the infirmity of your flesh, that is to say, because you would have failed to catch my meaning if I had been over-particular. You need that heavenly things shall be described in the language of earth. You could not other-

wise understand them, for you have not learned the language of heaven. That is your misfortune, the infirmity of your flesh. Take the words, therefore, as they stand, but make allowances. I am only speaking after the manner of men."

The great, urgent thought that is so pressing for utterance is the thought of spiritual freedom; and so far from regretting this parenthesis, we cannot but feel that much is gained by it for our understanding of that thought, by the implied refusal of St. Paul to go back and try to make his language more exact. We can feel his meaning pulsating through his words; his thought flashes into our minds and interprets itself all the more perfectly because St. Paul does not spend any time interpreting or explaining his language.

Dean Alford says in commenting on the passage, "The servant of righteousness is no slave, under no yoke of bondage; but in order to set the contrast between the former and the new state, better before his readers, he has used this word." And, we may add, having used it, he lets it stand, in order that we may think for ourselves what that slavery is which is the perfect freedom.

Great thoughts always have this struggle with the limitations and insufficiency of language. There are "songs without words,"

songs which are too great for words, for they speak where words would fail; yet we understand them, and love them, and know their meaning, without the power and without the need to tell why we love them or what they say to us.

Somewhere in the heart of Switzerland, there is a little church where at certain hours each day the organist gives, or used to give, a recital. To the traveler, attracted thither, the exquisite music of the organ speaks in his ear beautiful thoughts, akin to those which the wonderful scenery of that matchless country speaks to the eye. One of the favorite pieces is an imitation of a thunder-storm. You hear the sighing winds and the muttering of distant thunder. In your imagination, the lowering clouds are seen to wrap their soft embrace around the rugged mountains; rain-drops seem to be falling with gentle patter on the roof of the church; the rumble of thunder grows nearer and bursts into a roar and a crash; the wind shrieks and rushes past. You can almost see the lightning flash. Gradually the storm dies away, and the parting clouds let fall the broad, mellow sunshine, and the air is full of song-birds' voices.

All this the organ has spoken, not "after the manner of men," for thunder-storms do not submit to the fetters of human speech; but after

the manner of a master-musician; and the music has told what words would be unable to tell.

So with St. Paul, when he speaks of spiritual freedom. He disdains the fetters of speech. "Never mind the poverty of words," he cries, they have to be used, because you are human, or "because of the infirmity of your flesh," but the majesty of the theme, the glory of the thought, the splendor of the meaning, these defy the limitations of language. And St. Paul strikes the chords of our souls, as a skillful musician the keys of an organ, and there is more than can be spoken, "after the manner of men," in the message of his thought, far more than can be reduced to words; and yet he has to use words because there is nothing else to use. He apologizes for their inadequacy and hurries on, not stopping to change, retract or explain, thinking, as it were, to his flying pen and pouring out the rich, deep harmony of heavenly doctrine, as God's Holy Spirit gives him utterance.

Into the perfect harmony of his thought of freedom four parts enter, and how unspeakable to human speech they are! They are the conception of God, the conception of Man, the conception of the act of Redemption and the conception of the Redeemed. These four ideas possessed him completely. They had entered into his sensitive, well-trained mind, as once the

sun-light-surpassing brightness fell on him at his conversion; the light which was above the brightness of the mid-day. And he pours them out with all the eloquence of the intellectual giant that he was. See how noble they are.

Yonder, on Mars' Hill, in the city of Athens, you hear him telling, or trying to tell, so far as human speech will permit, his conception of God, the Being who "needeth not the work of men's hands," and who "is not like unto gold, and silver, and precious stones, graven by art and man's device;" "THE UNKNOWN GOD," unknown indeed to those who heard him, but better known to St. Paul and to the twelve who had looked on the face of Jesus and heard His words than all things else they knew; so that he could speak those words which we hear, as we listen across the centuries to the voice of inspiration, which proclaimed and still proclaims, in the ears of humanity, "Whom ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you."

But O, how the knowledge of God struggles with the words which have to be used, "after the manner of men, because of the infirmity of our flesh."

And then, there is his conception of Man. See how he piles up his descriptive phrases, here in this very Epistle to the Romans. Surely, there is nothing finer in all literature than this: "The Spirit itself beareth witness

with our spirit, that we are the children of God: *The children of God!* And if children then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ."

Turn over the leaves of his other Epistles. See some of the things he says of Man. "We are God's workmanship." "That we should be a kind of first-fruit of his creatures." "The first man is of the earth, earthy, the second man is the Lord from Heaven." Oh, wonderful humanity! What dignity is thine; how well worth redeeming!

And then comes his conception of the act of Redemption; for St. Paul sees the wonderful handiwork of God, brought into bondage under an enemy, and the awfulness of Calvary is as a background to the glory of the cross.

"As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive;" and the sacrifice of the blood of Christ is the overwhelming price of redemption. "In whom we have redemption, through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." "Ye are not your own, but ye are bought with a price." "It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell: and having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Oh, marvelous ministry of the reconciliation. It is as though some lonely pastor, seeking the sheep that was lost, had

stopped for a moment, on an Alpine crag, where sounds the rolling thunder, where shines the returning sun. Here are the tempest of life, and the peaceful calm of the Christian gospel. Who cannot feel the meaning of the Apostle's word-picture, inadequate though the words may be?

It is no wonder then, with all these conceptions within him, striving for utterance, that when he comes to tell his conception of the result of redemption, he should find himself trammelled again by the poverty of words. He has seen the slavery of sin; he touches a chord that echoes in our hearts when he speaks of it, for we also know only too well how sin enslaves us; how it hangs over us like a hard taskmaster, and makes us do the things we would not do; how it stays with us like a nightmare that will not let us rest. "Who shall deliver us," we cry with St. Paul, "Who shall deliver us from the body of this death?"

And as the answer to that cry breaks from his soul, there rushes upon us the multitude of his thoughts of the ransom, the price that was paid, "The Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world," "bruised for our iniquities," "dead that we might live," "sold under death" that we might be free! All this comes pouring out in the torrent of his thought as he proclaims humanity's deliverance from the

bondage of disobedience into the glorious liberty of the sons of God!

And that liberty, wonderful counterpart of slavery to evil, he calls the slavery to obedience and to God, but he says he has only spoken "after the manner of men" in saying that, because our human limitations require it, and not because the service of God is anything or can be anything but liberty, the liberty of law; the service of the perfect freedom; the uplifting, day by day, of our human wills that they may become one with the will of our heavenly Father, the Lord and Maker of the Universe; the only perfect liberty mankind can ever know.

His words are overwhelming in their force and sublime in their suggestion: "Now being made free from sin, and become servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but,"—and then he catches himself, and does not say what he is on the point of saying, the wages of God, but—"the *gift* of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord." This is the climax of his marvelous thought and his message!

No wonder the majesty of such conceptions as these defies the power of human speech: God, Man, the Cross and Redemption. And just as through the parted veil of the temple that hid the holy place of God's especial pres-

ence, so we see the new and living way opening, through the flesh of the crucified Redeemer, into the holy place of the heavenly temple, where stands the eternal throne. And there comes into our hearts the sweet, strong assurance, too beautiful for words, that now it is possible for us, yes, even for us, to walk on the highway of the redeemed, out of darkness, out of bondage, even on the way that "shineth ever more and more unto the perfect day." The assurance that only as we tread that way, are we free men, that only as our feet are planted on the rock can we "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." Partakers, indeed, of His humiliation, that we may become partakers of His glory, and able to understand the unspeakable meaning of the Apostle's words when he puts his whole soul into the cry which meant so much to him, and should mean so much to every one of us, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ Jesus, my Lord."

FAITH AND FATALISM;

OR THE FREEDOM OF A CHRISTIAN

“Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.”—I Tim., iii: 9.

Riding one day on the railroad train, a number of years ago, I quite unintentionally overheard a conversation. It not only turned my thoughts in a new direction, but lingered in my remembrance.

Two or three men, near by, were discussing the subject of the wreck of the steamer, “Portland.” They were evidently men of little education, and one of them stated that he had lost a brother in the wreck. They were apparently trying to fix the responsibility for the disaster. It was held by one man that the steamboat company was responsible. Another laid the blame on the captain; but finally agreement was reached when the third man gave it as his conviction that nobody was responsible. To use his own words, “Them sort of things is fore-ordained and whatever has to be will be. Just so many people has to be destroyed in a year. It’s all arranged beforehand, and there ain’t

no use trying to fix the responsibility. There ain't nobody to blame." To this, the others assented.

The conversation recalled to mind an essay which I had heard two or three years before, at a meeting of a certain literary club. In the essay, and in the discussion which followed, this very same theory was advanced and maintained by gentlemen of intelligence who used correct English, were well-informed and accustomed to think and reason for themselves; but who, nevertheless, had taken up with a theory of fatalism, as blank and hopeless as the most pronounced Calvinist ever held in the days of the Puritans, when predestination came so near to losing hold on Christianity by reason of its denial of man's free-will.

One cannot help seeing in the utterance of such opinions, by two sets of men, thus widely different in their education and circumstances, an indication of what may possibly be a theory as wide-spread as it is absurd and untenable. How wide-spread and how dangerous, it may not be easy to determine. If the destiny of mankind is to be regarded as a scroll, all written before-hand; and the development of history is simply the unrolling of that scroll; if "whatever is, has to be, and whatever has to be will be," then as certainly as two and two make four, it follows that nobody is responsible for

anything! Grant the premise and the conclusion is irresistible.

But the answer to the theory, all-sufficient as it seems to me, for its complete annihilation, is that it does destroy all human accountability, and makes it evident that the men on the railroad train were in the right, and "nobody is to blame," not only for the wreck, but for anything. I do not hesitate to take my stand upon the proposition that no theory can possibly be true which results in immorality. And as this theory does so result, the premise must be false.

We have a right to test theories by their results, and when we find men taking refuge from conscience, by the plea that they have no choice between the two paths which at every moment lie open before them; that their course is fore-ordained, and that what they do, and what they are, are matters fixed and determined without their having anything to say on the subject, and without their having the power to shape their own destinies; we have a right to say that such a theory is immoral; and therefore cannot possibly be true.

There is another proposition which I venture to state without hesitation; and that is that such a fatalistic theory as this, is the perfectly natural and logical result of having given up the Christian faith. But, thank God, men are

not always logical; and most men, I think, hesitate to go so far as logic would lead them.

But why do men give up their faith? Is it because it deals with mysteries and is itself a mystery? Do they overlook the circumstance, that it never pretended to be anything else? Do they think they have made a new discovery? Why, it is called a mystery in this very text and elsewhere in the New Testament; and yet it deals with, and gives us a working theory whereby we may deal with, other mysteries which are inevitable. The fact that whatever relates to the infinite must be mysterious to the understanding of the finite, is no reason for rejecting it; especially when there is so much about it that we can understand. The human soul sometimes must out-run the human intellect, and win its way up the heights of faith to the nearer presence of God; and not content itself with the maxim of a low and slow-moving theory which says that "seeing is believing"; and parts company with Him, in whom, not having seen, we Christians, yet believe, and whom we love and serve, in the exercise of a faith that does not always reason, but accepts some things as true which it cannot understand, and counts the things unseen as eternal.

Yes, the faith is a mystery. If it were not, it would not be faith. It does out-run the understanding, that is true. Who does not know,

really and truly, that seeing is not believing? Who bids us believe that the mystery of the faith is to be held in a clear understanding? Certainly not the writers of the New Testament. Certainly St. Paul says something radically different from that. He says, and he has probably weighed his words when he says it, that we are to hold the mystery of the faith, not in the understanding, but "in a pure conscience."

And what is the faith? In what relation does it stand to the conscience? The Christian faith is Jesus Christ Himself; that is to say, He is the Object which the faith-power grasps. The conscience is the moral nature; and Christ, who is our Faith, stands related to our moral nature, as supply stands related to demand, as wish to fulfillment, as food to hunger, as drink to thirst, as rest to weariness, as comfort to mourning, as refuge to wandering. In other words, "we are complete in Him," as the Apostle says, and no man is complete without Him.

Christ in the conscience, is the King on his throne. The pure conscience "holding the mystery of the faith," absolutely refuses to entertain the notion that all things happen because they are written in some terrible book of fate; that accidents are unavoidable, that we are the creatures of cruel and inexorable destiny; loosed from the bonds of obligation, and

yet bound in the chains of "fixed fate and unalterable decree." In place of such an awful theory, there rises up within every human being a solemn sense of responsibility for the right use and direction of the powers we undoubtedly have; and chief among those powers, the power of a free choice.

There is a difficulty, I am perfectly willing to admit, that amounts to an impossibility, when we attempt to reconcile our freedom with God's foreknowledge. Men always have felt that difficulty; probably they always will. But, if we know anything, we know for a certainty that we have the choice, at every moment of our life, between good and evil, and we know that we are responsible for the right exercise of that choice; and our freedom is the foundation of that responsibility. It is idle to tell us, we cannot decide what has already been decided; that we cannot be and that we cannot do whatever we will to be or to do; allowance being made, of course, for things impossible. It is only the utterance of a sane mind, when we say we have the power to go out of this church to-day and steal, if we choose to do so, but that we are not going to steal, and that there is no power that can make us steal. In other words, when a man becomes a thief, there is not a court in any civilized land that would for a

moment tolerate his plea in extenuation, that he had no freedom of choice. The common law assumes his responsibility, and bases that assumption upon the fact of his freedom.

As clearly as the noon-day shining of the sun, there is within us the power to accept Christ or reject Him. To as many as receive Him, to them gives He "power to become the sons of God." There is no partiality with Him, he has made an offer which all men are free to accept or refuse.

There are some things, it is true, which are impossible for us to do at present, whatever may take place in the future. We cannot fly; we cannot touch fire without being burned; we cannot tread upon the waters of the sea; nor otherwise defy the law of gravitation. These are physical impossibilities; but in the moral nature, nothing is impossible. "To him that believeth, all things are possible." The words are spoken in the sphere of conscience; and to him who "holds the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience," mysteries are made open "which the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, neither have they entered into the heart of man." "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." Doubtless, there is truth, mixed with many gross and glaring errors, in what is called Christian Science. It

does accomplish much that is good; and all that is true in it has always been known and believed by Christians in every age.

We know our limitations in the world of sense, and we know our freedom too, to follow the right, or choose the wrong. But He to whom the future lies open, as a book unclosed; to whom past, present and future are alike, He only knows on which side our choice will rest, and while we may not and cannot reconcile His fore-knowledge with our free will, we do know that both are real, and their reconciliation, we are humbly content to leave with Him. The faith that is held in a pure conscience, interprets Christ into life and action; so that it becomes possible for us to say with St. Paul, "Now I live, yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me." No man who in a pure conscience holds the Gospel in its completeness, from the manger to the cross, and from the cross to the crown, can shut up his generous sympathy toward all mankind. He must look upon the world with the eyes of Christ Himself. To accept in the conscience the ministry of Jesus as a living fact, is not alone to linger over the picture of that beautiful day, when thousands heard the wonderful Voice that spoke the Beatitudes. It is not alone to feel the emotions stirred at the story of the tempest on the lake, when that same Voice commanded the winds

and waves to be still; but it is to go on with that ministry; it is to bind up broken hearts; it is to minister wherever opportunity offers, for calming the storm that rages in the hearts of men, or for speaking the Beatitudes in hearts that need to hear them.

It is no unreasonable thing that we should "hold the mystery of the faith" thus, "in a pure conscience." It implies the possession of a power, which we know we have, to work out as free men, the highest possible destiny; as distinguished from the fatalism of those who, "having made shipwreck of faith," regard mankind as the victim of inevitable destiny. It is the declaration of the unspeakably glorious liberty of the children of God!

How majestic, in the accents of their mighty appeal, do these words of St. Paul ring out as we read them in the light of modern days: "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them, mightest war a good warfare; holding faith and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck: of whom is Hymenæus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." St. Paul could never have written those words had he thought men must blaspheme whether they would or not, nor would he have written

thus concerning their responsibility for spiritual shipwreck had he believed that material shipwrecks, railroad accidents and similar calamities are obliged to happen, by an unalterable decree, and "nobody to blame."

In other words, there is always open before us the choice between fatalism and freedom. It remains with us to decide on which our choice shall rest.

THE RECORD;

OR THE PHARISEES' COMPLAINT

“The Pharisees therefore said unto Him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

“Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true.”
—St. John, viii: 13, 14.

On the edge of the Palatine Hill, in the city of Rome, stands a triumphal arch. It is at the head of the Summa Sacra Via, and spans the entire street. Of all the triumphal arches in the city, this is the one most interesting to a Christian. It is called the Arch of Titus and Vespasian and was erected by order of the Emperor Domitian, to commemorate the conquest of Judæa.

Judæa was overthrown by Titus between the years 70 and 75 A. D., and here, carved in stone, we have that event recorded. On one of the inner faces of the arch, Titus is seen, seated in his imperial chariot, and on the other face are the soldiers of the triumphal procession; bearing trumpets, the table of the shew-bread and

the seven-branched golden candle-stick, taken from the Temple at Jerusalem.

One thinks as he stands looking at this precious monument, with its worn and battered figures in high-relief, all apparently moving with eager, unthinking joy, toward the city gate which stands open to receive their victorious train, of the workmen who wrought this work; of the artist who made the design; and of the emperor who gave the order for its construction. Domitian thought to do honor to the memory of Titus; the artist thought to obey the emperor's command; the workmen thought only to earn their days' wages, as they wrought with hammer and chisel, quite as ready to carve one thing as another. But to us, the forms and figures they have placed there proclaim a wonderful message.

Not alone do we read here the petrified story of Jerusalem's fall; not only the glory of a fading pageant, stiffened into imperishable stone. There comes a Voice, as we muse upon the picture, and it brings us a message from the Holy City, strangely sounding in the Sacra Via of the Eternal City: "As some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts, he said, As for these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. . . .

And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. . . . They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

And these are the things of which the workmen have made record; these are the things the artist has unconsciously portrayed; these are the things the Roman emperor has unintentionally perpetuated: because, may we not say it with reverence? God would have us know, and would have all others know, that the record which Jesus bore was true. He foretold the overthrow of Jerusalem and Judæa, standing in the treasury of the temple. Strangely enough, it was in the very same place, where He had spoken the words of our text, although the occasion was very different.

There had been much discussion concerning Him. Officers had been sent to arrest Him: they had come back empty-handed. "Never man spake like this man," they said. And then, while this was going on, and men were anxiously wondering about Him, and the Pharisees were especially bitter in their animosity, one morning He walked quietly into the temple, and all the people who were there came near to hear Him. He sat down and taught

them, and His words were these; as though He would answer the question that was uppermost in their thoughts, the question, "Who is He?" "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." At this the Pharisees break in with the accusation of the text: "Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true." It was a point apparently well taken; for He Himself had said, not long before, "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true." And He had followed that by saying that the works He did bore witness of Him. But now He is testifying not of what He does, but of what He is. How can He have any confirming testimony?

Little did they expect the reply: "Though I bear record of myself, my record is true, for I know whence I came and whither I go. . . . I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. It is written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me."

Men always bear record of themselves, both in what they do and in what they are. Not more surely did the Roman emperor inscribe a witness to the part Rome had taken in the fulfillment of prophecy, when he built that triumphal arch to the memory of Titus, than men

always bear record of themselves, true or false, which God either confirms or denies. There have been questions in their hearts regarding the record of their lives, and they have had their literal interpretation of such words as these: "Are not all these things noted in thy book?" "The dead were judged out of those things which were written in the book, according to their works." "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." They have thought of a terrible recording angel, whose affair it was to inscribe, in some great volume, the record of each moment's thought, word and deed; and one by one they have put away these ideas as fables. Yet fables they are not. Parables they may be, but none the less true, and the record that is borne is borne by every man himself. The book is the man, the pages are the days, and the volume is the life. "Thou bearest record of thyself."

Shall we think that because records imply paper and ink, that because books mean leaves and cover and binding and clasp, there is therefore no place for such things in heaven? Shall we, because we fail to imagine such a library as would be able to contain all the recorded history of every human life that has been lived, from the beginning on to the final day when the end comes, when the books shall be opened;—

shall we, because such thoughts refuse to be carried out into all their grotesque and cumbersome details, therefore think there is no record?

How is it with memory? How is it that the name you forget to-day comes back to you to-morrow? How is it that some new turn in the pilgrim way, "recalls," as you phrase it, some memory of your childhood, long ago buried under the accumulating happenings of your youth and age? How is it "recalled"? What do you mean by that expression? Had it gone away, or was it asleep? Where did it slumber that it needed the voice of new circumstances to awaken it? What is the particle of gray matter or where is the brain cell, that bears the record you are reading with your mind's eye, as the sweet voice of a singer, in some mysterious way, summons from its hiding place, the story of your school-days, the little church where you knelt in prayer and where you were confirmed, the hymns you sang, the Creed you said, the prayers that went up from your heart? Where is the explanation of that process by which you can, at this moment, reconstruct the form and picture the face of your absent friend? your father? your mother? yes, and hear the sound of their voices, hushed though they have been for long? and though

——“The names you loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb.”

Who shall say that heaven's record is an unreality, because heaven and its entireness of spiritual life and love and gladness refuse to be materialized?

Who that meditates on the strange circumstance of possessing such a thing as memory, will try to persuade himself that there is no permanent record of his life, when it may be that memory itself shall one day revive and be the imperishable record, inscribed without pen, traced without ink, bound without binding, stored in no library; but as real and impossible to forget—Oh, what would not men give sometimes if they could only forget!—as the golden candle-stick of Jerusalem's temple, carved in the stony procession on that triumphal arch of Titus!

Let us think for a few minutes of the record men are bearing of themselves. Again that record concerns both what they do and what they are. Again the witness of God confirms it or denies. Some men are recording, vast numbers of them I fear, that their estimate of themselves is not a high one. They are classing themselves with the beasts that perish, testifying to their own conception that the thing which

is best, on the whole, is to get all the enjoyment they selfishly can out of life, and make their maxim that of the Epicureans of old, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

To make everything bend to the one purpose of compelling each day to yield as much pleasure as it can be made to yield; to make self-gratification the law of life; that is what some of the *children of God* are recording as their idea of the meaning of life's opportunities, and of what they themselves are qualified to do.

How God contradicts this record, how in every moment of the day, and in the silent hours of the night when conscience awakes and pleads for the hungry soul with pleading that will not be denied, how the Holy Spirit contends with us for a better estimate, how the unfailing Voice of the Saviour sounds out its call, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and I will give thee light," all this needs only to be pointed out. It has its witness in the splendid make of our manhood, the faculties, the apprehensions, the capabilities of our rich endowment; it pleads in the unspeakable benedictions of God's Holy Church, "the pillar and ground of the truth," in the voice of the preacher and service of song and prayer and praise, in the privilege of the Holy Communion, in the ceaseless cycle of the Christian Year, presenting, without exaggeration or defect, the

whole story of the perfect Man, our God and Saviour. And God's witness confirmed in Holy Writ, tells how the sky darkens and the earth trembles when the record of Calvary appears, contending against this low, earthly estimate of ours, and bidding us remember that man's life is more precious than silver and gold, and "consisteth not in the abundance of the things possessed;" that its only satisfaction abides in that which goes out of it to make the world better, that power is nothing until love comes to liberate it, that scholarship, talent, money is but dross, save as it be purified by the fires of sacrifice and high resolve; that the finding of life may be the losing of life; and that the giving up of life for His sake who gave His life for our sake, is the only way to hope for the winning of life eternal!

But then, on the other hand, there are not wanting those, God knows how many or how few, that is not our question—to whom His confirming witness bears testimony that the record they are bearing of themselves is true. And these are recording, by word if need be, or by actions more eloquent than words. And what is their record? One word tells it completely and that word is *stewardship*. To them everything is borrowed treasure. This day they have borrowed from the storehouse of time, its golden hours they may not waste.

This body is a rented house where the pilgrim soul may tarry but a day, and where no unclean spirits may enter to disseminate the germs of evil; the equipment of life which alone is adequate, is that armor in which they may do God's battle when the trumpet calls.

And the record of good stewardship tells of obligations met and fulfilled, of faithfulness in time and place to the appointments of God and man, of talents multiplied by active trading, of sword and shield and helmet and spear, adorned with dents and bruises and marks of battle, of a banner torn with the tokens of strife, and of every captive thought "brought into obedience" to the service of Christ, man's true and only King.

"Thou bearest record of thyself." Yes, and more; for whatever be the story thy hands may carve on the face of the stone, thou tellest more than appears; even as the figures on that triumphal arch which told the truth of Christ's prophetic words, though Titus had no idea of fulfilling prophecy, nor Domitian that he was attesting to the unborn centuries the truth of Holy Writ. Be careful, for thou tellest more than thou dost intend; since He who is to confirm or deny the record we bear, shall take account of His stewards, shall unfold the significance of our life, shall tell not only what we do but what we are; and the meaning of all

shall be revealed in His interpretation who shall say of the record, "These things that ye did, or these that ye did not, ye did them or ye did them not unto me."

The record is more imperishable than the stones of any earthly monument, though it take centuries to crumble away. God grant it may be a record for each of us that shall be attended with triumph such as no imperial triumph ever equaled; the record of simple fidelity to our stewardship; the record it may be of suffering, since our sign is the sign of the cross, but a triumph such that the suffering shall not be "worthy to be compared with the glory" which, in God's eternal interpretation, "shall be revealed in us."

THE PATIENCE OF JOB;

OR THE PURPOSE OF TROUBLE

“Ye have heard of the patience of Job.”—
St. James, v: 11.

A very large number of people have heard that Job was distinguished for patience. A considerable number have a general idea of the ways in which his patience was tried; not a few have been found to wonder what Job would have done in their circumstances. Some have even gone so far as to study that Book in the Bible which bears his name; but comparatively few people would be able to tell, without hesitation, either the question which Job's life is set before us to answer, or what the answer was.

And yet I venture to say that beyond doubt, it is the most practical question in the world; and the most satisfactory answer which we are capable of receiving is given in that very same ancient Book. It is the one question which of all others is the most persistent with all of us; it meets us inevitably and insists upon a settlement.

Not to keep you in suspense, the question is this: "What is the purpose of trouble and suffering?" This is the question which men of every trade and profession, and women too, have to ask and answer. This is the question that will not consent to stay unanswered. This is the question which a great many people foolishly pride themselves upon having given up answering, and account themselves uncommon wise for having reached the opinion that it has no answer. This is the question which has power to color or discolor a man's whole life, according as he refuses to answer it, or gives it a wrong answer. It lies at the root of many a man's abandonment of the higher life, and causes him in despair to seek to forget God and religion in the reckless pleasures of the world or in the multitude of work, and to satisfy himself with the extremely poor consolation, that although this is a very hard world, we may as well make the best of a bad matter, and get what enjoyment we can out of things as they are, without going out of our way, to engage in the hopeless task of trying to make them better. This despair, sometimes causes people to reproach God in their hearts for having made such a world and put them into it for the mere purpose of having them suffer and endure trouble.

Now, the Book of Job deals with this whole

question and answers it. It is safe to say that comparatively few people know how thoroughly the subject is discussed and argued there, and to what a magnificently sufficient answer the discussion leads. If they only knew the Book of Job as they ought to know it, they would not take the view of life they do. It is one of the most human books in all literature; as beautiful as a poem, as simple as a fairy tale, as dramatic as a play, as profound as the most scientific thinker could ask, and quite as interesting as a novel.

Let me briefly give you an outline of the Book. Job is pictured at the beginning as a man of wealth and position in the community, surrounded by his family and leading the usual life of a good and happy man; careful to attend to his duties as a citizen and particular in his religious observances. Then Heaven is seen in council, and among the angels is Satan; not represented as evil but as a message-bearer, who brings tidings to Heaven of the affairs of men. God is represented as asking him what impression he has received of Job, and whether he has considered Job's integrity and steadfastness of character.

Satan replies that he has observed him, and that he justifies this high praise; but he adds in effect that Job has everything to make goodness easy. He has no trouble, he is wealthy

and prosperous, does not have to work for a living, and has no excuse to be other than he is. But let him once have trouble; let him meet loss and affliction, let anguish wring his heart and it will be seen how soon he will change his principles.

How human Satan is in that speech! How like the way we have all heard people talk. "Oh, yes, Mr. Wealthy is a church-going man, he can afford to be, he is just the sort of man you would expect to be religious. Everything is in his favor. How could you expect him to be anything else? But just let him change places with some poor fellow; let him know what hard work means; let him have to stop and consider where the next meal is coming from, and you will see how quickly he will change. You will see what will become of his religion."

But God has confidence in Job, and so He allows Satan to apply the test. Trouble comes. First from man and then from nature; then from man, then from nature again; like the alternating blows on the blacksmith's anvil, for the Book, having probably a historical basis, is artificial in structure. There probably was such a man as Job whose misfortunes were well known and whose story is dramatized in the Book. The Sabeans stole his cattle, fire burned up his flocks and his servants; the Chaldeans

carried off his camels, and the cyclone blew down his house and killed all his children. Now, let us see what he will do. The result justifies God's confidence in him. He refuses to give up his religion. Satan watches, and has to bring back word that Job remains faithful.

But Satan is still very much like human beings in his views. He thinks Job will break down if his burden is only made heavy enough. He has really not been touched in his own person as yet. But let God afflict him in some way that will cause him to suffer pain, and then see what will happen. So permission is given to test him in that way. It is just the way we have heard people argue time and again: "Oh, well, it is easy enough to bear poverty and affliction, but just let a man ache and suffer pain; let him have sickness or disease and you will find that his religion does not amount to much after all."

So Job has boils, "sore boils, from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes." Poor, dejected man! Whatever may be said of this trial, it certainly cannot be thought lacking in painfulness, nor in its searching and patience-trying nature. But Job still clings to his religion. His wife tries to persuade him to give it up and curse God, but he will not do it.

And there by the way, is another exquisite touch of human nature. We all know that, as a rule, women are more patient than men; we admit that, as a rule, they are stronger in their faith and purer in their life; that they are also more deeply moved by pity. Job's wife would probably have borne this trouble just as well as he did, if it had been hers to bear; but she could not endure to see her husband suffer. That is very true to woman's nature, it seems to me. And furthermore, while women are naturally more inclined to religion than men are, they are also more apt to go to the other extreme when they do give way. A bad man is bad enough but a bad woman, who shall describe! Macbeth is a coward, but Lady Macbeth will stop at nothing.

Job, as we have said, still refuses to let go his religion. Not even his wife can move him to curse God. He curses pretty much everything else, including the day he was born; but he clings to God, as the traveler on some storm-lashed crag, who, for fear of being swept over the precipice, clings ever closer and with bleeding fingers to the rock; or, as the drowning sailor clings to the spar; yes, as we sometimes, thank God! find poor, suffering creatures in the world to-day, enduring the loss of all things, but saying in effect, "I cannot give up my God. He is all I have in the world. I have lost

everything but Heaven, and that I will not and cannot bear to lose! Nothing shall take it away. Come poverty, come sorrow, come pain and sickness, my feet shall stand on the rock that is sure, my heart shall still cleave to my God! Yea, though He smite me, yet will I trust Him!" Sometimes we hear people saying that; and it is what we ought always to say, though sometimes it is hard to say it. That is what Job said.

And then came his friends! Oh, how human they are! How exactly like the people with whom we are all acquainted. They try to tell the purpose of all this trouble. Eliphaz, the Temanite, begins it. And he tells poor, suffering, aching Job that no doubt this has come upon him as a punishment for his sins.

Brethren, if it ever happens to be your duty to visit people who are in trouble, whatever else you may have the tact to say or not to say to them, do, I beg of you, avoid saying that! Cultivate discretion enough, if you have not enough by nature, to refrain from making heavier the burdens you probably wish to make lighter. If you would keep your sympathy free from reproach, you must let your heart's kindness find expression in kindly speech.

How often people play the part of poor, blundering Eliphaz, the Temanite; and cause the

sufferer to pray God to deliver him from his friends and neighbors!

Some day, a little child of yours comes to you with tears and bruises, weeping and lifting up his tear-stained face for just a word of pity and of comfort; and what do you say? Do you put your arms tenderly about him; soothe his pain, and calm his suffering, nervous spirit first? or do you insist on his telling you first of all, "what mischief he has been into now, and what next?" emphasizing your demand perhaps by shaking him as you harshly speak? Do you wipe away his tears, make him forget his pain, and then ask him to tell you how it happened, not in order that you may blame him but that you may show him how to avoid it next time?

These simple questions are worth your considering; you, to whom God has intrusted the treasure of child-love. And here let me add another word, worth remembering. Never tell your child, never tell anybody's child, that he is "enough to try the patience of Job." Some day the child may find out what it was that tried the patience of Job, and then its sense of justice will rise up and condemn you for having told what is not true. No child of yours, while yet a child, is "enough to try the patience of Job," though it may become so when it grows up; but if it does, it will be largely because its

father and mother did not have "the patience of Job" to begin with.

I suppose there is no commoner mistake than this of Job's friends, the mistake of supposing that all trouble is intended as a punishment. I do not think we are so apt to give that explanation in our own case as we are to bestow it upon our neighbors. It is very human, this habit we have, of looking on when Job or any other man meets trouble and saying, "Well, I wonder what he has been doing now?" It is so easy when a man loses money to say, "Oh, he has probably been speculating." Or, when his health gives away, "Oh, yes, I always knew he was imprudent." The thing to do is to say, in the unfailing tenderness of the Christ-spirit, "I am sorry for you, my friend, tell me how I can help you." That is, when trouble comes to other people. The thing to do when trouble comes to ourselves, may be to ask first of all, whether it is meant as punishment; and yet that may not always be the purpose for which suffering is intended. To remember this will help us when we encounter the phenomenon that so often staggers us, when we see the unrighteous in prosperity; and good people, harmless and well-meaning people, having a hard time of it.

But it is high time to ask what answer the Book of Job does give to our question. If punishment be not the purpose of suffering and

trouble, what is the purpose of it? I did not say that punishment is not sometimes the purpose of trouble. It is often that. There are cases where it is too plainly that to admit of any doubt or question, as when a man is punished for the sin of drunkenness by the horrors of delirium tremens. But it is not always that. The purpose, as it is disclosed in this wonderful Book of Job, is manifold. Sometimes this and sometimes that. Sometimes for discipline, sometimes to unfasten the affections that bind us to this earth; but always, as a part of the great, complex ordering of nature, trouble and suffering are for the testing of character.

Let me illustrate. I go into some great factory; I get close to the men; they are suspicious of me at first because I am a minister; but they become confidential when they discover that I am also a man. They talk pretty freely, and sometimes tell me their troubles; and they ask me, if not in words at least by actions, what it means. Why do they have troubles? What is the purpose of it? I change the subject, and say to them, "Show me about the factory. What do you make here? How does this machine operate? How much is your daily output?" By and by we come to a place I have been hunting for. "What is this room?" I ask; and they tell me, "This is the testing

room; here we try the article, to see if it is right. We subject it to a great strain. We watch and see how it comes out; and the good we save; the rest, we reject.”

This is my opportunity! “You asked me, my friend, about trouble and suffering; you wanted to know why it is in the world. Here is my answer. You are in God’s great manufactory, in which He is making saints and heroes, strong men, firm and resolute women, fit to become the citizens of heaven.—And this world? this world with its trouble, and affliction, and sorrow, and suffering?—Why, my friend, trouble is only the experience of the testing room! That is all.”

Go home and read the closing chapters of the Book of Job, and see how much better it is told there than in any words the human tongue can speak; and be very sure of this, that whenever trouble comes, which you have not caused, it does not come wholly by accident; but it comes because God has seen something in you that is worth saving, something that only the furnace of affliction can bring out. I do not think we have begun to measure the depth of meaning that resides in the old words, “Whom he loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”

HOPE AS A DUTY;

AND THE DUTY OF HOPEFULNESS

“*That ye may abound in hope.*”—Romans, xv: 13.

Not many years ago, there lived in Massachusetts an eminent architect of the name of Richardson. Among the buildings designed by him are two at Harvard University, a number of library buildings and others. The most conspicuous, however, and the one most widely known, is Trinity Church, Boston.

He had made his home at the North, although he was of southern birth. About the time when he completed his college course, the war broke out, and by the loss of all his property, he found himself reduced from wealth to poverty. He had already chosen the profession of architecture, and had begun to give evidence of the genius that was in him.

In a graceful sketch of his life, Bishop Brooks dwells upon this critical period, in words that suggest and illustrate the truth to which I ask your attention. He says, “His character and force came out under two great

impulses. He was both driven and drawn to greatness. Behind him came the pressure of poverty when his remittances from home were cut off by the war. Before him was always opening more and more the attraction of his profession, of which he wrote in 1862: 'The more I see and know of architecture, the more majesty the art gains. Oh, if I had begun at nineteen to study it!' " Then Bishop Brooks goes on to depict those years of struggle and attainment. "Little by little," he says, "poverty and the need of work are separating him from his old luxurious boy's life. Little by little a great art is claiming the liberated worker for its own. . . . It is the negative and the positive conditions; it is life saying to him 'There is no more money for you; you must support yourself,' and also 'Here is your work; here is your great art;' it is the sight of these two influences together, turning the light-hearted boy into the brave-hearted man, that makes these years picturesque and beautiful."

Out of this picture comes, as I have said, a suggestion and an illustration of the truth our text sets before us. He was "driven and drawn to greatness." The door behind him was closed; he could not retreat. The door was open before him; and he must enter. But the need must have been lost, swallowed up and forgotten in the desire. He must have been more

glad to go forward than sorry not to turn back; and so the bright sunshine of hope dispelled the heavy clouds of despair.

“That ye may abound in hope;” that is our text and our theme. I wish to speak of hope first as a duty, or, perhaps I might better call it, the duty of being hopeful. We are so apt to think of hopefulness as a matter of temperament or disposition or as an acquirement, that we fail to give it its true place among the duties of life. Faith and charity, yes; then why not hope? We see hopeful people and perhaps envy them the power of looking forward with eager expectation; while we are so apt to let the anticipation of disaster crowd out the thought of success, that we neglect the steps which lead to attainment. We are prone to turn back regretfully to the closed door of the past, and so lose sight of the vision which always beckons us on to the future.

The mistake amounts to a sin. The voice of God is always a voice that calls us forward and upward. The promises of God are always leading out into a more abundant future. It is our duty to open our natures to the influence of those promises and to expect God to keep word with us if we only keep faith with Him.

And as we look upon the lives of men who have wielded the greatest influence, or who are achieving the greatest degree of success, it is

unmistakably borne in upon us that the hopeful men are the men of power. To abound in hope is to abound in strength. Let us see what are the elements that enter into this great power.

We will put down first, Courage, as opposed to fear and timidity. No man can be a coward who has in him the power of hope. Equally, it is true that no man can be truly hopeful who is not courageous. The true courage looks to the end of the path, through all the difficulties, beyond all the dangers, and sees the object as of so much greater consequence than the steps which lead to it, that the spirit mounts with anticipated success and the heart is ready to do and willing to bear whatever may be required. Yes, Courage may well stand as the first element of hopefulness.

And the next is Imagination. God has not given us a dull, insipid nature that can see only what the panorama of the visible world thrusts upon the sight. He has given us the power to see "things invisible," and to hope for "things unseen," the power to lay the bright colors of imagination and the clear lines of anticipation on the mental canvas, and to make vivid and actual the dream of fancy or the object of ambition; and so to live in the realm of things we do not see; "for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for?" By the buoyant

influence of imagination the invalid loses his weariness and fancies himself in the vigor of health and strength. On the wings of Imagination the wanderer sees himself wafted home to the haven where he would be; and the toiler, the student, the soldier, listening to the voice of imagination already grasps the triumph which will be actual only when the toil, the study, the battle is done.

There rose on the inward vision of Richardson, we may well believe, the domes and walls and pinnacles he should build; and in the beauty of his "castles in the air" he forgot the dreary room about him, the lonely meal, the hard, solitary fight with toil and poverty.

We have a way of laughing at the builders of castles in the air, calling them young and inexperienced; we stigmatize them as of a poetic and therefore impractical temperament; but we forget in doing so that one of the marks which distinguish man from the beasts is this self-same power of making real the unreal, of seeing sunshine behind the gathering clouds, and of singing as the poets sing, where duller voices harshly speak. Yes, let us put Imagination as the second element of hopefulness; and to these two, we need only add a third. We have Imagination and Courage; there yet remains Desire.

A man may desire a thing which he does not hope for, but no man hopes for that which he

does not desire. And so there are always two elements in desire, the wish and the fulfillment. If a man's life were filled so full that it could contain no more, hope would be impossible; but no man's life in all the world ever is. Sometimes we carelessly look on the possessors of great blessings or of much treasure and say, "They have all that heart can desire." Our language is as careless as our knowledge is superficial. The moment we draw near and see the actual reality in any human life, that moment we discover that it has wants. The objects it wants may be high and fine or low and unworthy. According as we harbor this desire or that, we exalt or degrade ourselves.

The cultivation of the better part of our nature consists largely in the cutting off of desires, until we come to the power of saying, in regard to those objects for which men on a lower plane are striving, that they possess no attraction for us. We do not desire them. How fine was the reply of Professor Agassiz, when a lecture committee waited upon him and offered him an incredibly large sum of money for a course of lectures;—"But, gentlemen, I do not wish for money."

There seems to be another principle running through the whole subject, which, if it be a principle, is of the very utmost importance, and that is, that reasonable beings do not desire un-

reasonable things. The fact that we desire a thing does not prove that we ought to have it, but it does indicate that somewhere in the universe that thing exists, and that it stands related to us by ties of affinity, whether for good or for evil. No man can really and truly desire an absurdity. No child ever really and truly wanted to be an angel; but we do want health, and goodness, and power, and life immortal. We do want rest and recompense and all that heaven stands for. Perhaps we may need to learn more about the promises of God and to pray the wise prayer of the Prayer Book that we may, "both love the things which God commands and desire that which He hath promised;" but very much of the need of such a prayer arises from the fact that we have permitted our baser desires to get the better of us and unworthy objects to stand in the way of our vision, so that we do not see the splendor of God's answers to our best desires.

When once it has become known to us that the promises of God fit the soul of His child as raiment and air and sunshine fit the body, then hope spreads her wings, and bears us away to the attainment. Persuade a human being that all his best and deepest desires were put into him, not in order that they might be denied, but in order that they might bear witness to him, of their corresponding satisfaction; that

when he awakes "after God's likeness" he is going to be satisfied; persuade him of this and how far you have gone toward making it easy for him to understand why he wants so many things in this life, and how God can be good and still permit us to lack. How it can possibly be true that "whom God loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Yes, I do believe that many of the conditions of this life which we find so hard to bear were intended to teach us that this world must not satisfy us, that it never was meant to, and that it never can.

But to go through this life abounding in hope. Abounding in hope! Ah, that is truly to enjoy life, to anticipate its eternal and everlasting possibilities, to look forward to the surprise of each new unfolding attainment; that is to see that heaven is worth praying for, living for, working for and, if need be, dying for. That is to love God above all things, and do what one can to make this earth a beautiful ante-chamber of God's own glorious and eternal Temple; for heaven will not so satisfy as to leave no desire; but it will be the constant meeting of desire and fulfillment in a never-ending joy. The joy of unceasing advancement, "from glory to glory."

Courage, Imagination and Desire. These are the three strands of that cable whose anchor

of hope is fastened on "the rock within the veil." Let us never think that these are impossible for any one of us. If any of them is lacking, ask God to give it to you. He is not so far away that He cannot hear, nor is He unmindful when we call upon Him. One of the most beautiful names that men have ever learned to employ in speaking of Him is "the God of hope." Our religion is the Gospel of Hope. They alone are without hope who are without God in the world. To such as these life must be a perpetual enigma, or a stupendous failure, but to us who have learned to trust in Him, life takes on the richest and deepest significance, each day with its new experience, only making that significance more joyous and more divine.

If you would have the abundance of hope, dear friends, with its overflowing power, not only to be a benediction upon all with whom you come in contact but also to make your own life worthy of entrance into "those things which God hath prepared for those that love Him," seek for Him who is able to impart to you His own nature, "seek him while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near."

I have left myself no space in which to tell the things a Christian may hope for; the reunions, the recompenses, the boundless opportunities of heaven; nor could I exhaust the list

if I were to try; but the brightest and best among them all, we may have, for the fulfillment in an ever-increasing satisfaction like that which St. Paul declared, when he said of the God whom he loved and served, "I shall see him face to face." "Blessed are the pure in heart," says the Master, "for they shall see God."

WALKING HONESTLY;

OR THE PILGRIM WAY OF LIFE

“Let us walk honestly.”—Romans, xiii: 13.

If ever there was a time when this counsel was needed it is now. If ever there was a subject in regard to which such counsel was required, it is religion. To look things squarely in the face, to realize precisely what the Christian life is, to think exactly what the Gospel means, to take into our consciences the teachings of Christ and His Apostles, in place of merely human theory and the speculations which sometimes masquerade under the guise of religion, this clearly we all ought to do.

The New Testament sets before us very plainly the steps of our pilgrimage. Let us see what they are. A little child is born into this world and a wonderful new existence is begun; a body, soul and spirit that are to live together, years many or few; be separated for a while when the “body falls to dust again, and the spirit returns to him who gave it”; be reunited in the resurrection and live in the glory of

heaven with God forever, or else be cast out of His presence.

Born into this world, the child is American or English, Spanish, German or French, according to the place where the birth happened to be. In this, the child had no choice. Born into this world, it partakes of the condition of this world. And what is that condition? The Apostle, writing to the Ephesians, says, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in times past ye walked, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

This idea that we are all "by nature the children of wrath" may not be flattering to our pride; it may not agree with our notions of what ought to have been the case; and not a few people have found it a stumbling-block. But it is what the Bible says about us, and we are going to be honest and look facts in the face. Let us not, however, make the mistake of supposing that because we are born into this condition, we are not therefore, in any sense, by nature, God's children.

We are told in another place that "The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the sons of God." Our Saviour told the multitude to call upon God and say, "Our Father." Doubtless, then, we are made in the image of God, and are only the children of wrath because born into a world in rebellion, a land far-off and alienated from the Fatherland, a land where, without doubt, there is a great deal of trouble and suffering, just because it is in rebellion, just because it is a world that does not obey.

And the little child that had no option about being born at all, has to encounter the conditions of the world; not one escapes. God's child, in a sense, because the world is God's world, and yet, as the Catechism says and fully sustains by Holy Writ, "Born in sin, the child of wrath."

And at this point I think I hear some person ask, "Do you mean to tell me that this innocent, little child that never did any harm to anybody, is the object of God's wrath, just on account of being born into this world? Do you expect me to believe that the spiritual condition of a helpless infant is, or can be, the cause of any anxiety? You will have hard work to make me believe any such thing!"

In reply, I beg to say, let us not talk nonsense! Let us walk and talk honestly. God

loves that little child more than you do; but I also have some questions to ask of you. Do you mean to tell me that this little, innocent child, this child that never did any harm to anybody, is liable to sickness, liable to have his rosy little cheeks wear the hectic flush of fever, have his breath grow feeble, and his tongue parched, and his flesh waste away, for no other reason than because he has been born into this world? Do you expect me to believe that the physical condition of a helpless infant is, or can be, the cause of any anxiety? You will not have hard work to make me believe such a thing. For I know what it means to watch over the wasted and wasting fires in the little fever-stricken body, to count the feeble pulse and see the fluttering spirit just ready to take its flight; and you will have hard work to make me, or any other sensible and unprejudiced person believe that the Church is not a wise Mother when it tells the minister of every parish that he "shall often admonish the people that they defer not the baptism of their children longer than the first or second Sunday after their birth, unless upon a great and reasonable cause." For there is a brightness in the spiritual sky for the little pilgrim, just as there is health for the child that is brought under the conditions of health.

God's kingdom is in the world, and the

King's messenger has somewhat to say of the kingdom that has come, as He leads us to the Manger of Bethlehem where we may worship the Holy Babe who came to establish that kingdom, the Child on whom no stain of sin was ever found, the Child that was born of a virgin, as other children are not born, who came to His own and "to as many as received him, gave power to become the sons of God," in a way in which they were not such before. And when once a ruler of the Jews came to Him, with complimentary phrases and said, "We know thou art a teacher come from God," He disregarded the compliment and told him with startling directness that he must be born again! To Nicodemus' surprised inquiry how this could be, He explained and said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

And so the little child is baptized into the kingdom. "Born again of water and the Spirit," he is now, that which by nature he was not before. "For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body," and "if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature." Baptism is the new birth, the "washing of regeneration" as the Apostle calls it, and no matter what demands it may make upon our faith to believe it, baptism has made him "A member of Christ, the child of God,"—not a child of God,

which, in a limited sense he was by nature, but now "by the spirit of adoption and grace," "*the* child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." And so a new meaning is seen to reside in the words of Christ, when He says, touching the little children, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

"What," asks someone, "Born into the kingdom of heaven without consciousness?" Certainly; why not? The birth by nature was without consciousness or choice; the new birth may be the same; except of course in those unfortunate and exceptional cases, where baptism is neglected until maturer years have come.

And now that the child has received the "Spirit of adoption and grace whereby we cry Abba, Father," has been made the child of God, in an unlimited and covenanted sense in which it was not so before, we can understand why our Saviour laid such emphasis upon baptism. And if we have any different opinion on the subject, let us walk honestly enough to substitute His words for our own opinions. It was not the mere recognition with Him of something that already existed; He would never have insisted upon it in the way He did, had it meant no more than that; neither was it merely the enrollment of the child as a member of the heavenly kingdom. To Him it meant the act of

God's adoption, and the giving to the child of "that which by nature it could not have."

No man is a Christian by nature; and there is no way of becoming a Christian except by that which the Apostle describes; "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ," and "by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body." A man may have Christian sentiments or Christian impulses; he could hardly live in a Christian land without having them; but he is made a Christian only when he is "born again of water and of the Holy Ghost," without which the Saviour says, "He cannot see the kingdom of God." There is no way of entering that kingdom except by baptism.

That God will save a great many people who are not in the kingdom, is undoubtedly true. That there are children of the kingdom whom he will cast out, Christ expressly tells us; but, just the same, He has joined together Baptism and Salvation as the ordinary way, and has said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;" and therefore it is our business to be just as careful for the child's spiritual condition as we are for its physical condition, in which we take no chances, but simply obey the laws of nature, so far as we know them. And the laws of nature are only the laws of God,

after all; one of which laws, for the Christian, is, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel unto every creature, baptizing them." In that way, and in that way alone, the citizens of the kingdom of Heaven are born.

There are a great many loose, ignorant and imperfect ideas upon this subject, floating about in popular thought; for, strangely enough, people who would not think of offering an opinion in any other line, without having studied the subject, do not hesitate apparently, to set forth their ideas upon religious subjects without having learned or studied its first principles. For that reason I have spent so much time this morning in trying to show you, honestly and exactly, the teaching and the reason for the teaching of the Christian religion on this, the first step of the pilgrim soul on the way to eternal life.

The new-born child has now been born again. What is the next step? Education. Exactly as in the natural life; "Ye are to take care that this child be brought up to lead a godly and a Christian life," and "that he be brought to the Bishop to be confirmed." Confirmation seems to be regarded as a matter of course; but the training of a child which leads to confirmation and to all the earnest subsequent life of a communicant; how shall we give that training? How far surpassing the delicacy of the tender-

est plant in the green-house is this young "tree of the Lord's planting!" We want it to grow up reverent and strong, valiant, honest and true. Then, let us be honest with it. Let us give it wise instructors, let us beware of bribing it to goodness as if goodness were a crime that children could only be compelled or induced to commit for some outside consideration, and not the very life and joy of the soul.

Let us recognize its spiritual capacities. Let us beware how we lose our tempers and threaten it. Let us keep faith with it, and never break our promises to it; but over and above all other means we may take, let us keep it in relation with Christ. Make your boy know that he is a member and brother of Christ. Teach your girl that she is Christ's sister; keep His example before them, not to weariness but for inspiration. Tell them all you can of His child-life at Nazareth, of His manliness, of His gentleness, of His fidelity, of His unselfishness. Teach them to love His cross, by showing them what it meant and how bravely He bore it. Make them know the truth that His character is the bravest and manliest the world has ever seen. Point them to the time when they, as His confirmed disciples, shall count it their highest privilege to be partakers of His blessed Communion. Make them look forward with gladness to the time when, as youths and maidens,

they shall stand before Him in His Holy Church and "themselves openly with their own mouth and consent," renew in confirmation, the covenant of their baptism, and rejoice to "put on the whole armour of God," the need of which they must, by that time, have already begun to feel.

Show them, what a blessed thing you did for them, when you caused them to be made members of His kingdom, by the Holy Sacrament of their new birth in baptism; and unto what helps and privileges they shall find their way, as they, at your side, draw near with you, to the altar in whose solemnity they receive the sacramental Body and Blood of Christ, the food for sustenance of that new life which was sacramentally begun in baptism.

Along the pilgrim way are many other steps which circumstances will indicate differently to us all. Not the same to any two of us does the sunshine fall, on meadow, moor and mountain; not alike to any two do shadows fall and the rolling thunder tell of the coming storm; but all Christians are alike in this; that wherever we go, whatever we do, there is written on our forehead the sign of the Son of Man; God and men know us for Christians, if we are so, or they know us for the enemies of Christ if we walk not after the Spirit. But though men may mistake us and misunderstand us, God

knows us for exactly what we are. "Let us walk honestly."

Let us live up to our religion, and never know the meaning of fear; except "the fear of God" which "is the beginning of wisdom." Let us make our pathway bloom with deeds of Christ-likeness. Let us, in a word, fulfill our part of the prayer of our baptism, "that we may continue Christ's faithful soldiers and servants unto our life's end." Let us read our Bibles more than the custom of the present day seems to be, and "be instant," that is constant, "in prayer," and in communion.

And by and by comes the sunset of the Pilgrim's Progress, with the pinnacles and towers of the Holy City just beyond. Oh! what can exceed in beauty and peace the ending of such a pilgrimage as that! I have sought among the lives of men for the perfect ideal of a fearless and happy life; and I have found none that compares with that of a communicant in the Church of God, a loyal citizen of the kingdom of Heaven, defended by the Heavenly Father; walking honestly, and as sure of the glorious sun-rise in the morning of eternity as of the evening shadows when the twilight falls, and we lie down to rest.

AFTER DEATH

AN EASTER SERMON

*“Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?”—*Acts, xxvi: 8.

*“But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?”—*I Cor., xv: 35.

The gladness of Easter-Day is in our thoughts and in our voices. Everything in our service is calculated to express the unbounded joy of this, the Queen of Festivals.

But while we are rejoicing, it is impossible not to remember that there are some people in the world to-day for whom our songs and the message of our gladness have no meaning. It may be that we ourselves are not without questioning, when the richness of the day opens itself so abundantly for the satisfaction of life's deepest questions, and are wondering whether it is not, on the whole, “too good to be true.”

I cannot believe that any man wishes it to be untrue. It seems to me that everyone would be glad if he could enter, heart and soul, into the

Easter gladness. It must be with the deepest regret, and with unspeakable reluctance, that any man should part with his faith in the resurrection of the dead; but there are questions one cannot help asking, whether he gives voice to his thought or no; and rather because of the difficulties which surround the subject than because of any desire not to believe, one finds men refusing to sing the Easter Song of Triumph and stopping their ears to the words which stilled the sorrows of the weeping Martha and Mary, so many years ago, "I am the resurrection and the life." At times it does seem incredible.

Surely it will deepen and give stronger foundation for our faith, if to-day we rest our thoughts not only upon the words of the message but upon "the sweet reasonableness" of the Easter truth. For "why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" Let us consider that question before entering into any discussion of the way in which the resurrection is to be accomplished. That the resurrection is not incredible, I shall rest upon one single consideration;—the nature of the case. That it should be incredible implies that it is too wonderful to be true, but if it is not too wonderful that God has joined together a human body and a human soul, I do not see why it is inherently incredible

that the like wonder should be repeated, and that He should rejoin them when once they have been separated. The resurrection is not inherently improbable, nor incredible, in itself considered.

And if this be not sufficient, there is another aspect of the matter, also growing out of the nature of the case; and that is the circumstance that there is a constant resurrection of the body, going on and repeating itself, over and over again, in our human, daily life. I suppose it is a well-established fact that about once in seven years every particle of this material body undergoes so complete a transformation that the particles which composed it seven years ago, have all disappeared by to-day, and been replaced by new material. And if there is this constant waste of tissue, substance and fiber, attended by this constant renewal, and we are familiar with the process, "why should it be thought incredible" that the process should be dispensed with, and the body be revived and inhabited afresh by the soul from which, for a time, it has been parted?

There is no loss of identity; as one may see by considering the case of him who at the age of twenty-one, marries a wife. In seven years from his wedding-day, every particle of his material body has changed. The same is true with her. Seven years more and the change has

been repeated. Is he then, as he enters upon his thirty-fifth year, living with his third wife? Has she had two husbands? and is this one the third? The question answers itself in the asking. Identity has not been lost in his case nor in hers, and yet twice there has been a resurrection of the body in both cases.

It appears from these considerations, first, that so far as God is concerned, it is not incredible, and so far as we are concerned, it is entirely in line with experience. And this goes far toward answering some of the questions suggested by the second part of our text; which may be taken to represent the attitude of one who is willing to admit that the resurrection is not incredible on the face of it, but who raises the objections suggested in the question, "With what body do they come?" Let us see if, within the bounds of the Christian faith, and without fastening upon the conscience any human theory of the resurrection, we may be able to answer, or at least, to do away with some of the difficulties and perplexities of this question.

It may be that we shall find ourselves in the position of one who visits some picture gallery, and seeing a master-piece, whose general effect inspires the deepest admiration, draws near to examine its details, in order to learn whether it will endure close scrutiny. The glory of Easter Day is indeed like a master-piece of perfect

art, like a triumphant musical composition wherein every part is perfect and blends with every other part in the yet more perfect whole. But there is this difference; that whereas a musical composition may not endure to be taken to pieces, nor a work of art, as a master-piece of painting, to be subjected to close examination, yet in the truth we are singing and cherishing in our hearts to-day there can be no examination too minute, no scrutiny too severe. Every stroke on the canvas, every part in the celestial harmony is perfect, and will endure our closest search. Now, let us consider what we have to say to the man who asks, "With what body do they come?" Doubtless, we shall be permitted to sweep away not a few misconceptions and erroneous ideas as to what the Christian doctrine is, which is declared in the words of the Creed, "I believe in the resurrection of the body."

I suppose we are thought by some to teach and to believe that God is going to raise up in the resurrection of the dead every particle and atom of these material bodies, identically as they were when they were entrusted to the keeping of the grave. It may therefore occasion some surprise, although I hardly think it will surprise you, when I remind you that this is exactly what the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body denies. We are dis-

tinctly told, "Thou sowest not that body that shall be," "We shall all be changed," "He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself."

I do not think I could bear to preach the doctrine of the resurrection, if it involved this "atomic theory" of the identity of the resurrection body in its material substance, with the natural body which our soul now inhabits. I would not like to be obliged to tell the blind man that he was doomed to an eternity of darkness; nor the lame man, that he never could hope to leap and walk as other men. But, thank God, I am not sent into the world to carry any such message of despair and condemnation. On the contrary, I am commissioned to say something, to souls that need to hear the message, of a life in which "the eyes of the blind shall be opened, the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and the lame man shall leap as an hart." It is the blessed privilege of one who preaches the Gospel of the resurrection, as that Gospel really is, that he may tell the man who has been handicapped by infirmity, nor ever had an equal chance with his fellows, "The resurrection body is going to bring to you boundless opportunity, and make up to you for the disadvantage under which you have labored

all your life!" And, my friends, if the ministry had no other message than that, it would be enough to make it the most inspiring, fascinating and joyful of all occupations in the world; to go about giving good-cheer to those who are discouraged, and changing for them the garments of mourning into the bright vesture of holy praise!

And shall we know and recognize one another? Of the affirmative answer to this question, there is so little room for doubt one sometimes wonders the question ever is asked. Are we not told of recognitions after the resurrection of Christ, which, though withheld for a moment, as on that day at Emmaus, were purposely withheld, until He saw fit to disclose Himself; and we read that "He was known of them in the breaking of the bread"? And why should it not be so? The body, whether in its natural or its spiritual condition, is the tenement of the soul, and through all its changes it retains that personal identity which belongs to the soul; so that although the photograph which was taken of you ten, fifteen or twenty years ago, may bear little resemblance to the one that may be taken to-morrow; yet there is, beyond doubt, such identity of person, such continuity of experience, such backward reach of memory, as binds the man who is, to the man who was, in bonds that cannot be broken. Nay,

he may even, through accident or misfortune, have suffered the shattering and mutilation of the battle-field or of a railway disaster, or the wasting effect of long sickness; so changing the outward appearance, form and weight of his body, as to be unrecognizable; and yet, for all that, his father and his mother know him and claim him; his friends, his wife, his child, still call him their own, in a relationship which does not depend upon the identity of bodily form and appearance, but which does bear witness to that personal identity which subsists through all vicissitudes and experiences, from the cradle to the grave, and which, if our Easter songs have told the truth, will last on into eternity.

Yes, it will be a glorified body, but it will be your own body. You will know it for your own. It will shelter your soul as it shelters it now; and you shall stand, looking upon God in fulfillment of those majestic words of old, "In my flesh shall I see God, whom mine eyes shall behold and not another." It will be a human body, although glorified like the glorified body of Christ after its resurrection; in which He was able to disregard the bolts and bars which locked the room where His "disciples were gathered for fear of the Jews," a body in which He was able suddenly to stand in the midst and speak in tones they could recognize, as He ut-

tered the sweet salutation of former days, "Peace be unto you."

I said it would be a human body. St. Paul compares it to the growth of the seed or grain. He says, "Thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare (that is, mere,) grain. It may chance of wheat or of some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed its own body." That is to say, He gives to the wheat that is sown in the earth, no harvest of corn, or rye, or oats; but wheat becomes wheat again, and other grains in like manner reproduce themselves. So in the resurrection, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." But "to every seed his own body." Human beings are not to become angels in the resurrection, nor cherubim, nor any other order of created beings, but simply glorified human beings, having bodies that are so entire in their perfectness that it can be truthfully said of them, "They hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither is there any more pain." Only think, what a message that is to carry to the bedside of suffering and of sickness, and to the house of mourning! "No more pain, neither sorrow nor sighing." Who is there in all the world who would without reluctance, part from such a hope as this?

It may be that we utterly fail, we probably

do, in our attempt to imagine or describe what it must be to have the fulness of this glorified resurrection body of a human being. Looking upon our bodies as they are, so full of mystery, so wonderful in their power to carry out the mandates of the soul; the only words in which we can adequately describe them are the words of the psalmist of centuries ago, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." How, then, must the tongue falter, and the pen hesitate, in any attempt to describe the glory of the resurrection body, when we shall be "clothed upon with immortality," and exalted to membership in heaven's glorified humanity? No wonder we say within ourselves, as there faintly dawns upon our apprehension some dim and imperfect idea of what that condition must be, "Oh, it is too good to be true!" Let us rather say what we ought always to say when the blessed possibilities of the heavenly life steal into our thoughts, "It is too good not to be true." Why is it that we do not always frame our words in that better form?

But still, some man may say, "How do we know that there is any continuance of existence at all, after death? We see the eyelids close; we fold the weary hands across the breast. We lay the body away and that is all we know. What reason have we for thinking there is ever going to be any more than this?" Said a

friend to me once, concerning one who had died, "What do you know about this man, more than I do? What do you know about any future existence?" And my answer was, "Honestly, I do not *know* one single thing about it more than you know; but the difference between you and me seems to be that I have something to believe and to hope for on behalf of our friend who has fallen asleep, while you have nothing." I do not pretend that existence after death can be demonstrated, as a proposition in geometry or a mathematical certainty; but I have the record of His life and death and resurrection, who says, "If any man believe in me, he shall never die." That life and death and resurrection give me the only answer I can find to my "longing for immortality." What He has done seems to be so supremely what every human being needs to be assured of, that I cannot doubt the credibility of the account. And therefore, while, in the nature of things, there would only be a reasonable probability in favor of life immortal, to the Christian that probability amounts to so glorious a certainty, as to make his faith a reasonable faith; and yet stops far enough short of an actual demonstration to leave his faith in the exercise of its own mysterious power to lay hold on things beyond the grave. Faith is not yet changed to sight, it is true; but faith coincides with reason.

Of the celestial country and its features, no doubt we must remain without literal description. The language in which it is described in Holy Writ is language evidently meant only to convey some conception of its glory; and hence it employs terms which will not bear a literal interpretation; the streets of gold, and gates of pearl, and sea of glass, we recognize as indicating surpassing loveliness and worth; but we do not find, in terms like these, the literal account of what that heavenly country is; and so we end where St. Paul ended his argument and meditation, concerning the resurrection. God give us humility that we may acknowledge our limitations as we say the words; and yet may He also give us the inspiration from realizing how much the words must stand for, when filled to the full with greater meanings than an Apostle could imagine, as he wrote them down and said, "Behold, I show you a mystery."

DID THE MIRACLES REALLY HAPPEN?

OR GOD'S UNBROKEN LAW.

“He hath given them a law which shall not be broken.”—Psalm, cxlviii: 6. (Prayer Book Version.)

“No man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.”—St. John, iii: 2.

If miracles were what some people think them to be, one or the other of these two texts must be untrue. But, if miracles do not violate the laws of nature, what is their value, as bearing witness to the divinity of Christ? Let us face this dilemma.

That He allowed men to think that He wrought miracles and that they did testify of His divinity, we need not stop now to discuss; and, in inviting your attention to some reflections upon the miracles, I hope to be able to satisfy you that it is not unreasonable for us to believe they really happened, when we ask you to give them the weight to which they are entitled. I would like to have it understood, at the outset, however, that we ministers of the

gospel probably find the subject as difficult as any one else possibly can. We are not willing to adopt the easy theory that the Bible is mistaken whenever it records a miracle; for it is impossible for any human being to show the seam or line of cleavage between the true and the fictitious or legendary in the Bible record. We accept that record as it stands, and in trying to make the best of it, and separate its history, its poetry, its prophecy from one another, "rightly dividing the word of truth," we do not deny our own reason, nor do we ask other people to exercise a faith-power which would not only amount to credulity, but which would be a childish contradiction of the reasoning faculties.

Let me begin by making a distinction, in the use of language, between a certain expression, in common use but misleading, and another expression which I think should be substituted for it. The word "supernatural" is a misleading word. Strictly speaking, there can be no such thing as "the supernatural." If the laws of nature, as we understand them, are merely the observed and regular order subsisting between cause and effect, then with God in His world, and in His universe, everything is natural, though it may be superhuman; and if it be supposable that there are laws of nature which have not yet been observed or discovered by

man, it is entirely conceivable that what were called miracles and are still so called, are entirely within the limits of a divine understanding of laws not known to us. Superhuman indeed, but, strictly speaking, not supernatural.

A word first in regard to the Old Testament miracles, or a few of them. I do not think I shall be exposing myself to the charge of not "reverently handling the word of God," if I declare that I believe the human writers of the Sacred Scriptures were permitted to use their own faculties of observation, to give their own impressions and to record the things they saw and heard, from their own standpoint, and sometimes with their own limitations. The account of the flood, for example, must be read in the light of the intelligence of the age when that account was written. It must not be read literally, in the light of modern discovery. The writer has recorded what was seen at the time, and since it would have been physically impossible that the entire face of the earth, as we know it, should have been submerged or inundated, I hold that it is entirely reverent for us to believe that the earth was inundated in those parts which were known to the historians of the time, and that it was perfectly true for them to say, from their limited understanding, that the waters "prevailed upon the face of the whole earth."

When we are told that the sun and the moon stood still, it is open to us, who know what such an occurrence, literally happening, would have meant in the way of wreckage to the entire solar system, to believe that the historian again recorded only what he observed.

Again, when we are told of Jonah, that he was swallowed up by a great fish, and three days after cast forth upon dry land, it may not be amiss for us to meet the objection that such an occurrence would have destroyed his life, by admitting that it is highly probable that Jonah did die in the process, and that he was raised to life again by the power of Him who afterward declared that Jonah was a sign or type of His own resurrection; a thing which he could not have been exactly, had he not really died. If you will read the Book of Jonah more carefully, you will find in it certain expressions which lend color to this theory; and it contains one of the most beautiful prayers ever framed by the human tongue. But it is my desire to occupy your time this morning, rather with the miracles of the New Testament; because they do not admit of the same mode of classification and treatment as those in the older Scriptures.

I cannot agree with those who maintain, as Doctor Briggs does,* for example, that our

* "The Incarnation of the Lord," pp. 114, 115.

Lord had so emptied Himself of divine power as to remove from the miracles which He wrought their witness-bearing significance to His divine nature. I cannot agree with him when he says that they were only such wonders as were wrought or might have been wrought by Moses and the prophets. That they were meant to testify to Christ's possession of a divine power over nature, such as no merely human being ever possessed, seems to admit of no question; that He allowed them to be so regarded is clear from His having admitted, tacitly, at least, that Nicodemus was right when he said, "No man can do these miracles which thou doest, except God be with him." Do His miracles then violate that law of nature to which reference is clearly intended in the saying that God has given "a law which shall not be broken"?

I have not the slightest hesitation in affirming my belief not only that the miracles of our Lord do not violate natural law, but that they are even the expression of natural laws beyond what we know, and in obedience to which they were wrought. I accept the record as it stands. I do not believe that God would have permitted such a series of statements and accounts of miraculous happenings, to have survived through all the centuries, if it were nothing more than a series of mistakes on the part of

those who were not competent to distinguish between the false and the true. It may be hard, indeed it is hard, to "believe the miracles," as the common expression goes; but it would be vastly harder to believe that God, who "is not the author of confusion," but the God of law and order, came into this insignificant little world, in the person of His Son, and violated His own laws, right and left, during a period of three years, while He exercised His ministry, in an obscure little province along the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

Obviously, the miracles recorded of our Blessed Lord may be divided into two classes; those which relate to man, in his bodily or spiritual nature; and those which relate to the material world around him. We are told that He called upon the former of these two classes to bear witness that He was the Messiah, when he sent back the messengers to John the Baptist, and gave them the message best calculated to cheer and encourage that despondent prophet in prison; "Go and show John again what things ye do see and hear. The blind see, the deaf hear, the dumb speak, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached unto them." The restoration of health, or sight, or hearing, is not a violation of natural law; that it should be done without instrumentality, simply indicates that it is beyond the usual mode

of happening; superhuman, if you please, but not supernatural. That life should reanimate the body sleeping in death, is an occurrence beyond the power of humanity, it is true, but not beyond the conceivable power of Him who gave life to the body in the first place.

It is just possible that in the development of biology, our understanding may be enlarged as to biogenesis, or the origin of life; but, given such a Being as His who could say truthfully of Himself, "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again," it is entirely conceivable that He would possess a knowledge of the laws of life, superhuman again but not supernatural, which would enable Him to raise the dead. I hold that my faith is logical when I say that I confidently believe He had that power and exercised it, in accordance with the record in the gospel.

When I read of His converting water into wine, I recognize a different class of miracles; but I think I am within reasonable limits when I declare that I believe the record, though I may not understand how He annihilates the usual process, whereby water is constantly being changed into wine, by passing through the several stages of the grapes, the wine-press, and the fermentation. And it is again no violation of natural law, if possibly He calls upon a higher law, not to repeal but to sus-

pend the action of the ordinary law, any more than it is such a violation of law when I overcome the resisting force of gravitation, or rather when I interpose an extraordinary force and disturb the ordinary effect of gravitation, as I do every time I will to exert my muscles, and lift a book from my desk. It is absolutely impossible for me, or any one else, to give any account of how the loaves and fishes were made to feed a great multitude. We simply cannot explain it. The fact of the "twelve basketsful of the fragments that remained over and above to them that had eaten," would indicate that the few loaves and fishes had been multiplied, but whether by the annihilation again of all the ordinary processes, or how it was done, it is impossible to tell. In this class of miracles, all I can do is to accept the record, and see in the occurrence the manifestation of a higher law and a beautiful illustration of how the great Church of God, with scanty store, does always feed the multitude; and makes her insufficient resources suffice for her overwhelming work. "As poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." Perhaps, if I could explain the miracle, this observed feature of the Church's life would not be so wonderful to me as it now is, when I am called upon to say, and to hear others say, to lame and suffering humanity, what the apostle

said in the beginning; "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I unto thee."

I read of Him, who came into the world "to destroy the works of the devil," casting out of the bodies of men the evil spirits by which they were possessed and tormented. I confess it makes no difference to me whether the language which is used to describe the complaint of the sufferers, means that these people who were said to be "possessed of devils," were merely lunatics of greater or less degree of insanity; or whether it means some other and more spiritual disorder. All I am contending for is that it cannot be considered a violation of the law and order of nature that Jesus should have been able to call upon some higher, and to us unknown, method of enthroning the reason in that eminence from which it had been dethroned, in whatsoever way the catastrophe had happened; any more than it is a violation of nature when the same thing is wrought through the marvelous patience and skill exhibited in modern methods of treating the insane. This does not empty the miracles of our Lord of the wonderful testimony they bear to His divine power and nature. It only sets in clearer relief that divine obedience which marked His perfect humanity; since it leads us to the conviction that He always worked in ac-

cordance with the "law which shall not be broken."

Indeed it would be incredible that He, whose whole life was Obedience Incarnate; whose cry, in the hour of deepest agony in Gethsemane, was the cry of obedience, "Thy will, not mine be done;"—it would, I say, be absolutely incredible that there should be any act of His life, however superhuman, however marvelous, however surpassing our powers of comprehension, which was not characterized by strict and perfect accord with the laws of nature which are the laws of God.

I look once more upon the scenes of His marvelous earthly life, and I see Him walking on the waters of the sea. As I read the story, I hear of one who, moved by sudden impulse, leaped down from the little boat, and attempted to meet upon the unresisting surface of the waves the coming Lord. He failed and began to go down. Shall I convict myself of an unreasoning credulity if I confess that it seems to me quite within the bounds of conceivable knowledge upon Jesus' part, of superhuman laws, whereby again He could restrain the force of gravitation, without breaking it, when, standing upon the crested waves, He put forth His hand and saved the sinking disciple?

It may be that I have not covered all the classes of miracles, as they relate to humanity,

and to the material world; and it may be that my mode of looking at the subject is not an adequate and entirely satisfactory method of dealing with the subject. It is entirely within the limits of possibility that there is a wiser and better line of suggestion. I am only telling you, to whom the miracles may have furnished some difficulty, a few of the considerations which have helped me; and I shall be thankful if they help any of you. I believe that our Lord not only accommodated Himself to the circumstances, modes of thought, and habits of living, of the age in which His ministry took place, but that He was, to use the common expression, far "beyond that age"; not only as far beyond it as we are, but farther beyond us than we are beyond the days in which He walked, in visible form, through the streets and over the hillsides of Palestine.

I cannot help thinking that if a man living in Jerusalem in those days had told his neighbours of a time to come, when men, by boiling water, would generate a power which would carry them over the face of the earth at the speed of sixty to one hundred miles an hour, he would have been regarded and described as being "possessed of a devil"; and the only reason why he would not have suffered violence at the hands of those to whom he uttered such a wild prediction, would have been because he

would have been a "harmless" lunatic, in their estimation. And yet that man's prediction, miraculous as it would have appeared, is to us no miracle at all. It is simply the statement of a power of nature, the exercise of which was so utterly beyond the citizens of Palestine, that it might well have seemed to them superhuman, although we know very well, that it is not supernatural.

I think it is entirely consistent for a Christian to hold such a conception of the orderly working of nature as to see no place in the universe for the breaking of nature's laws; and yet to believe that there are depths and mysteries and possibilities, yes, and probabilities, of powers and laws and intelligences whereof this earth as yet has only caught the faintest whisper. That I can stand in New York, and talk with my friend in Denver, and hear and recognize the intonation of his voice, is to my mind as wonderful as any of the miracles in the Bible. Yet it does not contradict the laws of nature. It does not break a single commandment. We know how it is done. We stand, in relation to the miracles of our Blessed Lord, in the same relation in which one of the fishermen on the shores of Galilee might have stood toward the marvel of the long-distance telephone.

Yes, I believe every one of our Lord's

miracles. I do not say they furnish no difficulty to my faith; I do not say it is easy to reconcile them to my reason; but I do say and I think it is profoundly true, that while humanity may, at some future time, acquire the power to do the same things which Jesus did, and greater, according to His promise, yet it is always an evidence of His divine power that, in that age of the world's progress and of human enlightenment, He was able to do the things that are recorded of Him. And when I add to those the wonders He is still working in the lives and hearts of men, I bow my head and say, with Nicodemus of old, "No man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." Nay, I go farther, and, with St. Thomas, I confess my faith in Him, and call, out of the depth of love and adoration, "My God and my Lord."

TEARS WIPED AWAY

AN ALL SAINTS' DAY SERMON

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”—Rev., vii: 17 and xxi: 4.

There is a reason for taking this text in both its settings, and that reason is this; the words refer to different people, in the two places where they occur. In each the action is located in different surroundings. In one, we are told of the joy of Heaven; where tears are to be wiped away; the other tells of the comfort of earth, where sorrow and mourning are to cease.

If ever there is a time when we may lovingly dwell upon this glad unity between the living and the dead, it is when All Saints' Day invites us to meditate on that article of the Catholic Faith in which we say, “I believe . . . in the . . . Communion of Saints.” If ever there is a time when the Church of Christ leads us up to the heights of Christian comfort and privilege, it is when she gives us this autumnal Easter-Day, beautiful antiphon of the spring-time Easter-Day, and reminds us that Christ has become only “the first-fruits of them that

slept''; conveying to them who mourn the sweetest comfort possible; "the comfort of a reasonable, religious and holy hope," which is based upon the certainty that the first-fruits are the pledge of the last-fruits, as the spring-time pledges the autumn, as sowing promises reaping, and as seed-time waits upon harvest.

That which God will do for them "who have come out of great tribulation and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," and are to dwell with Him in Heaven, He will also do for them which tarry here; "He will wipe away all tears from their eyes." Members of one body, comprising "the whole family in heaven and earth," they are one in the blessing of God's unceasing kindness and of His infinite care. They who have gone before are only waiting for the number of God's elect to be made complete, that all may enter the perfect joy of Heaven together.

Of that intermediate state between death and the judgment which Christ calls "Paradise," we know that it is not the perfect joy of Heaven, that it is only a nearer presence of Christ; and that it is that place or condition of conscious rest, where Lazarus in Abraham's bosom lives among "the spirits of just men," being "made perfect"; for none are perfect here, nor will be until all are there, as it is written: "These all having obtained a good report through faith,

received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us, should not be made perfect." In that unfulfilled promise to the waiting, expectant Church of Paradise, behold the wiping away of tears from their eyes and ours.

But do they know and watch over our pilgrimage and warfare here? Do they still care for our struggles, our failures and our success? I think so, when I recall such words as these: "Seeing then that we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us run the race that is set before us." The witnesses can only refer to those who have just been mentioned, in the chapter before, as having, "through faith subdued kingdoms and wrought righteousness," together with all the long catalogue of saints which fills that chapter from end to end. Among them must also be the souls of our own faithful departed ones.

Let us never be afraid to assert and rejoice in the Church's doctrine of the divine revelation of Paradise, through any concern at the errors of those twin sisters of presumption, "Purgatory" and "Spiritualism." There is as little foundation for the doctrine of Purgatory as there is for the pretense of spirit-rappings and materializing. Against both these the teachings of the Scriptures as to the Communion of Saints is amply sufficient, even as truth

is always the best safeguard against error.

We know that they who have fallen asleep in Jesus "are delivered from the burden of the flesh, and are in joy and felicity." To us they seem to be asleep; *Mors Sempiternum Somnium est*, says the old pagan saying, Death is an Eternal Sleep; but to the Christian, it is not so. St. Paul says, "To depart and be with Christ is far better," than to remain here, he means. But how could it be better unless it were in a nearer, clearer, conscious presence than before? And when we think what the delivery "from the burden of the flesh" sometimes means, what escape from pain, what release from weariness, from weakness, from infirmity, and "all the ills that flesh is heir to," I am sure it is a wiping away of tears not only from their eyes, but from the eyes of us also, who are left to rejoice that they are at rest.

There is much that is withheld, much that we cannot know at present, and we must "dare to be ignorant of many things"; but we do know this, for it is spoken to us by that Voice from Heaven which said, "Write, from henceforth, blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." There is no passing the "great gulf, fixed between the good and the evil; and yet we may hope that in the eternities to come God may bridge the gulf. But

there must be progress in that other life, yes progress for the sinner, for it is written concerning some sins that they "have no forgiveness in this world nor that which is to come"; and so it seems clear that there must be some sins which are to be forgiven in the world to come; and the fatalism which forbids us to think of any chance of future probation, seems to have nothing in God's word to rest upon, unless it be that famous text, "Where the tree falleth, there shall it be"; a text which has neither reference nor relation to the subject; although, unfortunately, it has been rhymed into that misleading hymn,

"As the tree falls, so must it lie:
 As the man lives, so will he die:
 As the man dies, such must he be,
 All through the days of eternity."

It is not surprising that such misrepresentations of Christian doctrine have driven people away from the everlasting love which has "opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers," "brought life and immortality to light," and made life immortal synonymous with immortal progress "from glory to glory"; since life without progress is impossible.

And what shall we say of prayers for the dead? Is there any Christian revelation upon

that subject, and if so, what is it? Beloved, it is probable that when our Lord was on the earth, the Jewish people were in the habit of praying for their departed ones; and while He rebuked them for many things, there is no recorded word of rebuke for that. Let others, then, if they will, venture to condemn where Christ has been silent, not we.

Believing as we do, that there is progress and forgiveness and growth toward perfection in Paradise, before they reach that perfection which is promised, we may safely believe that it cannot be wrong to ask God for mercy on all them whose souls are in His keeping, whether it be here or whether it be there. He "shall wipe away all tears" from the eyes of those who are with Him in Paradise and of those who sorrow here. Surely there could be no tears that would stand more in need of His touch than such tears as those, for instance, which a mother may shed for a wayward son who has died.

I will not rest the case for the privilege of praying for the departed on the instance of Onesiphorus, who is sometimes considered to be a clear case of prayers for the dead, but I will rest it upon the broader foundation of that divine conception of God which tells us that "His mercy is over all His works," that "His compassions fail not," and His love is greater

than earthly parents feel. It is well in matters such as this to leave the individual Christian at liberty to do as God gives him the wisdom and the inclination to do. The Catholic Church is far from countenancing the Roman doctrine of masses for the dead, and of indulgences, and of the invocation of the saints, and of purgatory; for these form no part of Catholic doctrine, as you will readily perceive; but here again, truth is the best defense against error; and "God hath not given us the spirit of fear," that we should refuse to enjoy all the comfort and consolation He has given us, simply because some merely human theory or system of doctrine happens to have been invented whereby some have been led astray.

It is when we see the beauty and the reasonableness, the truth and comprehensiveness, together with all the loving tenderness, of the Holy Church's interpretation of her Bridegroom's messages to human souls, it is then that we want to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free," and not be "entangled" in any "yoke of bondage."

But chief and most important of all that I have to tell you this morning, is this, concerning the Communion of Saints. The nearer we come to Christ, the nearer we come to those who are with Christ. It may be we do not feel all the significance of this until we come to

know by experience what it means to have our dear ones enter Paradise.

It may be that we shall find that nearness which we long for in some act of sacrifice or of duty; it may be that we shall find it in some sweet hour of prayer or of holy meditation; I do not forget such nearness as that when I remind you that Christ's own idea of nearness to Him was the sacramental idea, when He bade His disciples to sup with Him. And whatever idea men may have concerning the Lord's Supper, we may be very sure of this, that in that Blessed Sacrament we do draw very near to Him by faith, and so to them who are gone before us into that better land where they behold the Lamb "that was slain and is alive again for evermore."

I always want to tell people who are in affliction that which I believe to be profoundly true; that there is no time and no place when God so surely fulfills Himself, and wipes away all tears from eyes that weep, as when we draw near to Him in that Blessed Communion of Saints where, "With angels and archangels and all the company of Heaven, we laud and magnify His glorious name."

Then let us remember to-day, beloved, those who in faith have entered into rest; not only those who have been nearest and dearest to ourselves, but those also with whom our friends

have been called upon to part; not only those whose names have been written for the last time on the roll of our Parish Register during this year; but also those who have lived and labored here in all the years that are past. Nay, let us set no limit, but remember ourselves to be of noble line and heritage which reaches across the centuries in stately procession until it includes "the noble army of martyrs," "the goodly fellowship of the prophets" and "the glorious company of the Apostles," aye, "the Holy Church throughout all the world."

Let us ask God more earnestly, more faithfully and more lovingly, for His holy comfort to all who mourn, and that He will indeed "wipe away all tears from off all faces," and that He will "give us grace so to follow His blessed Saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to those unspeakable joys which He has prepared for those who unfeignedly love Him: through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen."

THE WILL STIRRED UP

SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE ADVENT

“If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.”—2 Cor., viii: 12.

I have heard people say that the Prayer Book service had too much sameness from Sunday to Sunday. No one ever says that who attends the service regularly from one end of the year to the other. There are elements in it which are alike from Sunday to Sunday, just as there are constantly recurring wants in our nature; but it is inconceivable that there should be a greater variety than we find in the Prayer Book service as it rounds out completely the cycle of the Christian Year. To-day, for example, is the last Sunday in the old year, and it is filled with the great idea of our possibilities. See in what varied forms that idea is brought out. We have heard it in the story of the multitude, fed with the scanty loaves and fishes. That beautiful picture, in which we have been led out under the open sky, must have taught

us not to "despise the day of small things." We have heard it again in the mystic promise of a coming "seed of Israel" which is to be "gathered out of all countries" and brought again to "dwell in their own land." We have let the words go by perhaps, with a passing wonder as to whether they mean that the Jews shall literally be gathered together again in Palestine, or whether God may not have some larger purpose which shall make, in every land, a homeland for His spiritual Israel.

Malachi has spoken to-day, ringing words as of a divine challenge: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Perhaps there has entered into our thoughts some faint perception of possibilities which will open up their long vistas before us, if ever the Church of the living God accepts the challenge and puts Him to the test.

We have heard, in the Holy Scriptures of to-day, the Blessed Saviour telling of sorrow changed into joy, and the promise of answer to prayer; and it may be we have been led to resolve that the preciousness of these possibilities shall not be lost, if it lies in our power to make them actual.

And there is just the point. It does lie in our power! It is inconceivable that God should hold out possibilities merely for the sake of tantalizing us. He lets them depend on us, not because He needs us, but because He wants us to have the honor and the privilege of sharing with Him in making them actual. Just as surely as we act up to our part, we may depend on Him to keep faith with us; and so we put our thoughts into Prayer to-day and utter the quaint and needful supplication; "Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people, that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by thee be plenteously rewarded." We have heard the playful nickname by which to-day is called, "Stir-up Sunday," from the opening words of that prayer. I think it would be well if it could be made a "Stir-up Sunday" in earnest, for every child of God, for every Parish in the Church, and for all the Christian world.

It is the closing Sunday of the Christian Year; let it crown the parting year with better hopes; let it arm us with new resolve and better courage for the years to come. And when we think of the possibilities held out to us, or suggested, in the abundant measures of Holy Writ specially appointed for the service of to-day, and read in our beloved Church all round the world, when we remember how, in the far-away

little mission church in Dakota, where the red men are gathered with their pale-faced brothers, they are hearing to-day those selfsame words that we have heard in Porto Rico, "Gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost," when we remember that in England's stately cathedrals and in China's humble mission halls, in Boston's great congregations and in New York, Chicago, Denver, San Francisco, Alaska, they are praying to-day that selfsame prayer, like "England's drumbeat which is heard the world around," "Stir up, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people," when we think of this, does it not seem as though it were enough to make the very heavens tremble with the answer, if we were only earnest enough in the prayer! It surely seems to me as though there must be enough spiritual energy generated by the exercise of such united devotion, to sweep away all the evil that is in the world to-day, and make the world such as Christ intends it to be; so that He would not be ashamed of it and disappointed at it, if He should visibly come this next Advent-tide, as come He surely will some time!

And why are not these possibilities made actual? Largely, I think, because you and I, and the rest of the people, do not believe they *are* possibilities. For, let us look at it, in the way our text states it. Only see what allowances

are made for individual differences of power and capacity. "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted, according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." There is where the start must be made; with the individual. There is the standard; the individual ability. And right there is where we make our fatal mistake. We hold back the willing mind. We do not permit God to stir up our wills, because we have a wrong standard.

If I were to say to any single one of you, "You are not making nearly as much out of your spiritual life as you ought to make; you are not half the Christian you might be," probably you would say, "I know it. It is perfectly true, but what would you have? I cannot be like so-and-so; I cannot give as other men can; you don't know what calls I have to meet. I cannot throw myself into Christian work, the way some people do; you have no idea how busy I am." And so you would let "I cannot" wait upon "I will." So you would think and say that God is asking impossibilities of you, or at least that I, as God's minister, am so asking, which is a very unjust thing indeed to say or think.

Who in the world ever asked you to be like anybody else? You could not if you tried, and nobody wants you to. God has made it absolutely impossible for you to be like anybody

but yourself. But He does tell you, and He permits me to bring you the message, that you are to believe in your own possibilities! Satisfy your own standards; that is to say, satisfy your own conscience, providing your conscience is not out of repair; and there is no one else in all the world that has any right to question you. But, my brothers, did you ever know of any one who could honestly and truthfully say that he had satisfied his own conscience? that he had done the best he could have done? Who is there who ever reaches the standard so perfectly that he can truthfully say he is the Christian he might have been? I do not know such a person in all the world. I do not believe there is one who does not need to make that prayer his own, "Stir up, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people."

You must never think that God does not take into account your circumstances, your limitations, your opportunities, your resources, and your obligations. He knows all about it, and He is absolutely fair. He is the only Being in the universe who *is* absolutely fair. What you and I need to ask ourselves is, whether we are willing to have Him judge us fairly, according to the measure of our ability; and when all has been said that can be said regarding our capacity, or lack of capacity, I think we shall discover that the amount of unemployed energy

which is latent in every one of us, and which God has a right to expect us to use for Him and for the world, is so great that we shall be astonished at the possibilities which ought to become actual, and would become so if we would *will* it to be!

Let us bring this closer. I sometimes think we are like those people who went up with Nehemiah to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. It was very hard work, and there were a great many unsympathizing spectators who made trouble by their remarks. For instance, there was Sanballat, who was enraged, and mocked at them, and said, "What do these feeble Jews? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?" And then there was Tobiah, who tried to pacify him, and told him, "Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall." That must have been a pleasant thing for people to hear, who were working as hard as ever they could, to build a stone wall which should be able to resist the siege of an army! But that was not the worst of it, for we read that "the Arabians, and the Ammonites and the Ashdodites conspired together to come and fight against Jerusalem and to hinder it." And just about that time the tribe of Judah weakened and said, "The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is

much rubbish, so that we are not able to build the wall."

But the remarkable thing is, and this is what I wish to call to your attention, that in spite of all the mocking, and criticism, and wrath, and conspiring, and discouragement, the work went right on; and every one of the priests led the way, and repaired the part that lay at hand, "every one over against his own house," and of the people "every one with one hand wrought in the work, and with one hand carried a weapon." A soldier and a servant, you see, just like the Christian! And by and by the work was done; the wall stood firm, complete and beautiful; all done in fifty-two days! And then Nehemiah wrote these words: "And it came to pass that when our enemies heard thereof and all the heathen who were about us saw these things, they were much cast down in their own eyes; for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God."

Then they had a great Thanksgiving-Day service; and Nehemiah said, "Go your way, eat the fat and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength." Now, my friends, I say it with all the earnestness of which I am capable, that is just the kind of spirit this Church of ours needs

to-day, the spirit of Nehemiah; the spirit that never knows what it means to fail in God's work; the spirit to pay no attention to any foe who tells you God's work cannot be done; the spirit that will not be daunted as Judah was, because of the great rubbish heaps that had to be cleared away. It may be there is some of that kind of work which the Church needs to do. We need the spirit to realize that success, in the final analysis, depends on the individual, in Christian unity and combination with all the other individuals, and to realize how easy the difficult work becomes when everyone does "that part which is over against his own house." That is what it means to have our wills stirred up, so that we may realize how great things we can do for God and man, if we only think we can!

I shall never forget that ringing appeal which Bishop Brooks once made, nor can I help thinking how perfectly the words apply to all our parishes and to every member of them; "If I had," said he, "one hundred men who were as devoted as ten men whom I could name, I could revolutionize the city of Boston!" If God would stir up the wills of all the people of our parishes, as He is stirring the wills of some of them, there is positively no limit that you and I would dare to set to the power for God,

which every parish ought to be, and might be, in the community where it is placed.

I am sure you will not think me forgetful of the good work the Church is doing, simply because I see and tell of greater good we might do. You will not think me unmindful of the various circumstances in which each family and each individual is placed, nor that I do not realize the pressure and the limitation which those circumstances sometimes create. All I ask is that you will open your hearts to the Holy Spirit of God, so that He can stir up your will. That is, let every one say what some say, "We will do what we can, to make our parish the power it ought to be." I do not think any man or woman is a true, practical Christian, one who will not be ashamed and afraid to look upon Him who is the Head of the Church, unless he or she is saying and doing that very thing. For He who recognized, in the ancient days, the poor woman's act of service, made it forever memorable by saying, "She hath done what she could." I am not sure that He would say that of you or of me.

It is true that in some of our modern institutional parishes there is hardly a day or a night in the week when the chapel or the guild room is not open for the busy workers, engaged in some one or other of the many parish activities;

but I am perfectly sure there are a great many parishioners who are not aware of that fact. The modern, up-to-date parish is a beehive of Christian industry; and I bless God that it is so. The parish that is not at work is moribund; which, being interpreted into good, plain English, means that it is so nearly dead as to be a spectacle for mourning. The parish that lives for itself alone, and thinks it is doing about all that can be expected of it if it pays the interest on its debt, and never does anything outside of its own borders, is not a dying parish, it is already dead; and the parish that does not want to die must see to it that its members are alive and in earnest.

Let a fire be satisfied without spreading, and it will soon burn out, grow cold and be extinguished. It is just the same in our parishes. Yes, and in our own individual Christian hearts. The only way to keep the fire alive is to cause it to reach out its light and warmth and spread abroad. In other words, the only thing that can keep a Christian or a parish from decay, is the spirit of Christian missionary work.

There is much to do in the busy parish of modern days, and there is much satisfaction in the doing. Oftentimes it seems as though the things we ought to do and are asked to do were utterly beyond our strength. It is hard to be-

lieve that they are possibilities. We look across the borders of the closing and of the opening year, with something of the feeling of Philip and Andrew, when our Blessed Lord asked the question which rings out in the Gospel for to-day, "Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?"

And you remember how dubiously the two Apostles regarded the question and how they must have shaken their heads in uncertainty if not despair. But our Saviour counts no good work impossible, as was made manifest on that occasion. And so when men ask us, "Do you believe that miracle about the feeding of the five thousand?" we may answer, "Yes, I do believe it, for I see the Church of Christ doing a work that is even more wonderful than that, in feeding the far larger multitude in all the world to-day, with the bread of life; and year by year out of her unfailing store, scanty though it be, keeping up the supplies, and gathering, of the fragments that remain, more than she had at the first. Yes, the work and life of the Church of the living God is a wonderful thing in the way in which it goes on, "plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works;" a blessing in the world, and for the glory of Him by whom it shall be "plenteously rewarded."

And when, in God's own time, it pleases Him to restore the Church's broken unity, and to

give to its disorder harmony, and to its confusion method, and to its misdirection order, so that every part in its own measure maketh increase of the one body, and all speak the same thing, in one great, organized Holy, Catholic Church, every individual blending his service in the majestic movement of the whole;—then shall the world itself be irresistibly made the kingdom of Christ, even according to the prayer which He prayed for the unity of His Church, and rested upon the answer to that prayer His assurance that the world would believe in Him: saying,—O may we remember it! “I pray that they all may be one, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me!”

CHRISTIAN UNITY

A SACRED TRUST

“Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”—Eph., iv: 3, 4, 5.

The outlook for Christian unity is full of hope and promise. Never in the history of the Church of the living God was “the unity of the Spirit” regarded with so large a measure of the spirit of unity as now.

I say this with full recognition of all the variety in detail, all the superficial and even fundamental differences, all the separations and distinctions which characterize Christendom. For it is an undeniable fact that all the lines are converging; the face of every Christian in the world to-day is turned in one direction, “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.” One common purpose animates every heart; the promotion of righteousness. One eager desire dominates all endeavor; the desire

for truth. One controlling impulse is setting the sweep of its irresistible current toward a common end; the love that seeks the highest good for humanity.

In our endeavor to "keep the unity of the Spirit," it is worth everything to bear all this in mind, since it is essential, first of all, to realize that there *is* a unity to keep. We may seek to enlarge the area of the existing unity, we may pray and labor for the removal of differences, and for the full and well-rounded harmony which shall take the place of discord; but it is a comfort to realize that we are not expected to create, nor to seek for unity. We are exhorted to "keep the unity" that even now exists. This consideration places the subject in its true light. And when, to our perplexity and amazement, it appears that not all Christians value unity at its evident worth, when it seems as though our overtures met with coldness or indifference, when impatience and irritation are aroused at the mention of the subject inasmuch that "when we speak to them of peace, they make ready for war," still it is inspiring to realize that "the unity of the Spirit" has never been lost; that every one of the elements which the apostle enumerates in the text, as comprising the manifold "unity of the Spirit," is to be found, abiding in that unbroken unity to-day.

If the varying methods and differing mani-

festations of Christian energy sometimes obscure the underlying unity, it is well to remember that such "differences of gifts and diversity of operations" are entirely in harmony with the unity of the Spirit, who is the one source of all power, and of whom all Christian energy is a manifestation. We are told that heat, light and electricity are but different modes of motion, all correlated, as resultants of one agency or force. It is the tendency thus to trace all phenomena in the physical world to a common origin. The analogy when we turn to the spiritual world makes for unity and seeks that common origin in the one Spirit, "dividing unto every man severally as he will," those results in life and character which we call "the fruits of the Spirit."

And it is further worth remembering that those fruits disdain all sectarian badges. They refuse all denominational classifying. The kindness of a Benedictine friar to the freezing traveler in the Alps is the same article in every particular as the charity of a Presbyterian nurse to the sick child of a Porto Rican peon. The faith is one, says our text, though we may consider it differently. The hope of your calling is one, he adds, though you may not all hold it alike. Have we not the right to add to his unities and say, charity also is one, find it where you may? And is there a grace or a virtue in

all the Christian catalogue of which the same is not true? I cannot think of any.

It is instructive furthermore, to consider the *form* of the apostle's words: "There is one body and one Spirit." Not there ought to be, but "there is," "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." By far the larger part of our religion consists in the recognition of these unities, and in the life of work and worship to which such recognition leads. And concerning all but one in the list, the Christian world stands to-day in substantial agreement. May we not say then with truth that "the unity of the Spirit" has been kept to a greater degree than at first sight appears? That it has never been lost?

And as regards the exception; "there is one body." Never was there greater reason to hope for a recognition of the unity of the body of Christ, the one Holy Catholic Church throughout all the world, than there is to-day. Of the fact that "there is one body," not two nor twenty, but one, there would seem to be no reasonable room for question. The apostle states it as an existing reality, not as something that ought to be, but as a truth unchangeable. And while herein there is wide difference of conception as to what is the one body, and as to what features are essential to it, yet I find encouragement in the fact that these differences of

opinion do not affect or touch the fact. A very much larger part of the Christian world to-day accepts the statement, "there is one body," than ever before, I am fully persuaded. And when it appears that the question which separates Christians has been narrowed down in the vast majority of cases to this one issue, that of identifying the one body, surely it does look as though an outward and visible agreement could not be long delayed!

I do not minimize the importance of every element which enters into that identification. But I refuse to be discouraged by the amazing indifference with which vast bodies of Christians still seem to regard the subject, for I presume that such indifference arises partly from failure to see the advantages of Christian unity, the enormous economy of resources, and multiplying of efficiency it will bring when it comes; and partly from a settled conviction from which men need to be aroused, the conviction that unity is impossible. It is not impossible! Reunion is all but an accomplished fact. Christian unity itself exists. It is a sacred trust; it is to be kept, cherished, set at work. It never has been destroyed, though men have obscured it, and lost sight of it, and though they have tried to make substitutes for it, and have tacitly agreed to differ, and have tried compromises, and alliances and every sort of device. There

stands ever the peerless truth, putting to shame all inferior conceptions: "There is one body."

And if it be asked how that body is to be identified, surely the answer is not difficult. But let us beware of putting aught in the way, that may hinder the process, the glorious process of the clearer and clearer manifestation of the unity of the Spirit; a unity that is to be cherished "in the bond of peace."

It is a time and a cause in which we must abandon groundless prejudice and cultivate the open mind, that we may see clearly the distinction between essentials and non-essentials. It is a time and a cause in which to cultivate an intelligent loyalty to all truth, together with a willingness to modify merely human opinion. It is a day in which to exalt the Gospel that is in every denomination, so that all denominations may lose their narrowness in the Gospel. And it may be that the way by which Christian unity shall be revealed is the way which seems to have least to do with it. That is to say the way of a more abundant carrying forward of the work of Christ in the world. For the body of Christ is subject to the law of Christ, and He did not depend upon argument, council, canon or decree for His victory and recognition in the hearts of men, but declared, "The works that I do, they bear witness of me."

We must be satisfied with no light token of

our unity, nor may we regard any evidence of Christian unity as sufficient that stops short of that which was in the beginning; that is to say a Holy Communion to which every Christian shall draw near with faith, as the means of Christian unity and its sacramental pledge: "For we being many, are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread."

Oh may God "inspire continually the universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity and concord; and grant to all those who do confess His Holy Name, that they may agree in the truth of His Holy Word and live in unity and godly love; be filled with His grace and heavenly benediction; and be made one body with Him; that He may dwell in them and they in Him, forever."

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